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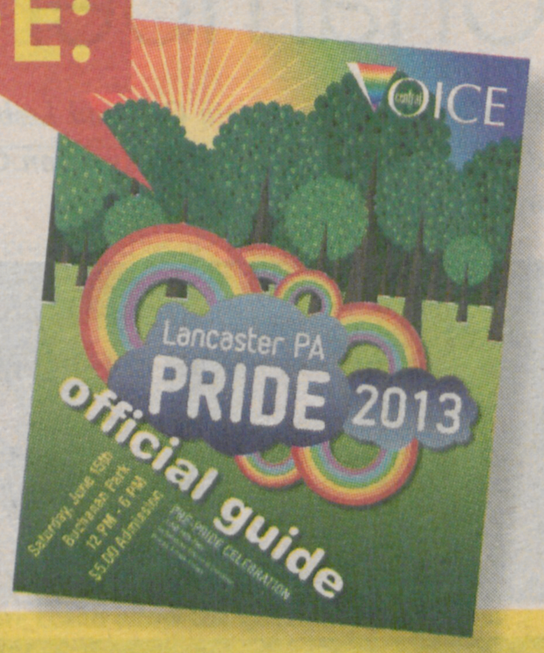

FREE

MAY/JUNE 2013

Middletown HS Forms First Gay-Straight Alliance

Chambersburg Finally Allows

By Daniel Walmer

"We're here. We do exist. We have feelings, too."

It's a simple message, but one some Middletown lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgendered students like Elyse Grizzle, a junior at Middletown Area High School, believed was not getting through.

So Middletown Area High School's Gay-Straight Alliance was born.

About 15 students regularly attend meetings of the first-year club, and they have a variety of reasons for taking part.

"I just don't like it when people bully other people for being themselves," sophomore Alexa Bright said.

"They really understand what you're going through," said Grizzle, who initially joined the club to support her friend, club president Lexi Stoner.

Stoner contacted the school guidance office about forming the club last spring, only to discover that other students had expressed interest as well.

The club is active in everything from advocacy to charity. It has raised money for the homeless in Harrisburg, created a pledge for students to sign to promise not belittle people because of their sexual identity, and discuss LGBT political issues.

But perhaps the important thing about the group for most of its members is the support for one other.

"Having a group makes it easier to talk rather than having an elephant in the room," said Bright.

"We're basically here to just raise awareness and find some friends," Stoner agreed.

Stoner knows that becoming the club president could put a target on her back – but that's OK with her if it helps make Middletown's Gay-Straight Alliance a permanent reality.

"One of my big beliefs is, if you believe in something, and want something bad enough, it can happen," she said.

While a few people have disagreed with or mocked the club, most have been accepting, said junior Tasha Doster.

"We haven't really gotten negative feedback as much as I though we would," she said.

People have for the most part been positive or kept their opinions to themselves, Stoner agreed.

And while it can be a challenge, Grizzle has come to accept that not everyone will be supportive of the LGBT community.

"There are people in this school that are completely against this, but that's OK," Stoner said. "It's really hard to talk to people like that, but I feel that everyone is allowed to have their own opinions and their own beliefs."

One of the biggest challenges has been explain-

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Making a Difference

Taking on Harrisburg's Maclay St. Bridge

Harry Young and Eric Gutshall volunteer to clean up the litter-strewn bridge.

"We wanted to improve Harrisburg's Maclay St. Bridge environment because it will make an immediate and noticeable impact on our city," explains Harry Young. He and his partner Eric Gutshall have taken on the volunteer task of cleaning up the area on both sides of the newly-renovated bridge. Gutshall is chief of staff for PA Rep. Patty Kim. Young is a manager for Hershey Entertainment & Resorts.

Both sides of the bridge, a major entry and exit point for the Capital city, are

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Male Stripper Speaks Out pg 32

▼ LANCASTER PA PRIDE - JUNE 15 (*pages 17-24*) ▼ CENTRAL PA PRIDE - JULY 27 (*page 28*)

Chamber Annual Dinner

The Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce held their annual dinner March 2 at The Hershey Lodge and Convention Center. With about 90 in attendance, the event highlighted the organization's work over the last year.

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Political Update

Why Tell the Truth When Lying Is So Much Fun?

In what appears to be a desperate attempt to hold ground in a debate they are losing, the National Organization for Marriage is lying one for Jesus. They have claimed that the Chicago Bears support the Ruth Institute, an arm of the National Organization For Marriage, which opposes same-sex marriage. Not so. The Bears released a statement after the team was described as a Ruth Institute supporter. "I sign a lot of stuff for charity and I don't always know where it goes," Brian Urlacher told the Tribune. "If I would have known it was for this cause, I wouldn't have done it."

NOM's Jennifer Morse admits she lied, issuing a statement: "The Ruth Institute is not working with the Chicago Bears organization or any of its players past or present to promote our upcoming auction. The memorabilia we are auctioning off was acquired by me personally, not through the team or players. We understand that the Chicago Bears organization takes no position on social issues, and we regret any confusion we may have caused on this point."

Family Research Institute on Justice Kagan's "Why Not Gay Marriage?"

Conservative research think-tank, Family Research Institute, recently revealed Dr. Paul Cameron's new research on gay marriage at the National Press Club. He claims to have looked into 1.7 million Danish and 4,700 US deaths for possible health effects of gay marriage/partnering. He says he found that homosexual coupling has a large, negative effect on lifespans in San Francisco and Boston, where gay communities are well-established, and in Denmark, where gay marriage, he also says, has been legal since 1989.

Facts seem to be so easily confuse, and anger, anti-gay marriage folks. The Kingdom of Denmark only has a population of about 5,500,000 people. The average death rate in Denmark in a given year is about 1% of the total population, according to the CIA World Fact Book, meaning that about 55,000 people die in the whole country each year at current population levels. Very roughly - and this is an excessively high estimate, for obvious reasons - something like 1.3 million Danish people have died since 1989 - total.

Kansas Legislature Could Allow Quarantine of HIV-infected

A proposed bill in the Kansas state legislature could allow the quarantine of people with AIDS or HIV, according to an LGBT advocacy group in testimony before a Kansas state Senate panel on Thursday.

The measure, HB 2183, would authorize the state's Secretary of Health and Environment the authority "to prevent the spread and dissemination of diseases injurious to the public health, including, but not limited to, providing for the testing for such diseases and the isolation and quarantine of persons afflicted with or exposed to such diseases."

The bill's intent is to protect the public health by controlling "infectious or contagious diseases" such as HIV.

"There is no reason why anybody with HIV or AIDS should be subject to quarantine," said Tom Witt, executive director of the Kansas Equality Coalition, in a hearing before the Senate committee on Public Health and Welfare. "This is a civil rights issue.

Obama Nominates Lesbian Judge

President Obama has named attorney Elaine D. Kaplan, current general counsel for the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, as one of two nominees to become a judge on the United States Court of Federal Claims. If confirmed by the U.S. Senate, Kaplan would become the second out gay person to serve on the specialized court, which hears cases brought by citizens against the federal government to recover monetary damages.

In 2009, Obama nominated and the Senate confirmed Federal Claims Court Judge Emily C. Hewitt, a lesbian, to become the court's chief judge. Hewitt, whose 15-year term on the court ends in October, was first appointed to the court by President Bill Clinton in 1998.

DE Voters: 54% Support Marriage Equality

Equality Delaware has released a statewide poll showing a majority – 54% - of the state's voters support the General Assembly passing a marriage equality bill. Just 37% oppose it.

The poll of 600 likely 2014 voters was conducted by the Global Strategy Group on February 12-14, 2013.

The Delaware NAACP also supports marriage equality. In a video NAACP Delaware State Conference President Richard "Mouse" Smith says, "The NAACP has always believed in treating everyone fairly under the law. Which is why the NAACP supports civil marriage equality here in Delaware." The NAACP video follows the announcement of support for marriage equality by the Service Employees International Union in Delaware (32BJ SEIU). With momentum gathering, Delaware state Rep. Melanie George Smith (D-Bear), who sponsored the state's civil unions bill, said she will introduce a measure extending full marriage rights to same-sex couples in the First State, although she did not indicate a time frame.

The "Gay" Thing: Does It Still Matter to Voters?

Central Voice asked openly-gay candidate for Harrisburg City Council Ben Allatt to share with us voters' reactions when going door-to-door on the campaign trail. We wondered if The "Gay" Thing still mattered.

Ben Allatt

Openly-gay Dan Miller was elected to City Council and is now the city's elected Controller who is running for Mayor. Openly-gay John Campbell has been elected City Treasurer. Could it be that city residents vote on something other than a candidate's private life?

In the last General Election, openly-gay Chris Dietz ran for a seat in the state House (104th). He garnered 13,264 votes to incumbent Republican Sue Helm's 15,902. Dietz's number of votes surpass all recent elections except "the Helm/Gene Stilp matchup in 2010," Dietz told Central Voice after the election, when Helms won by only 313 votes. Dietz did as well as any other Democratic challenger when running against his incumbent opponent, his openly-gay campaign having no measurable effect on voting habits.

In the 105th state House district, openly-gay Kelly McEntee ran against incumbent Republican Rep. Ron Marsico. Neither candidate faced a Primary opponent. McEntee pulled 12,073 votes to Marsico's 22,436 or more votes than any of Marsico's challengers since 1988. Her openly-gay campaign had no real effect on voting patterns.

Central Voice wondered how voters reacted to Allatt. Did you bring up being gay?

It isn't certainly the first thing I would lead in when discussing who I am, much as it's not the first thing I bring up when I introduce myself to anyone. I think the difference here is that within my information and biography's it is out there. When people ask me questions about my family, I will mention my partner Stuart. This has been the same as I go door to door and people ask questions about my life. It is interesting because I have always felt that living your life honestly is the best policy. I guess the simple answer is that if I was having a meaningfull conversation with a voter, it is inevitable that my being gay would come up.

Did anyone ask you about being gay?

I don't recall anyone coming out and asking me directly about my sexuality.

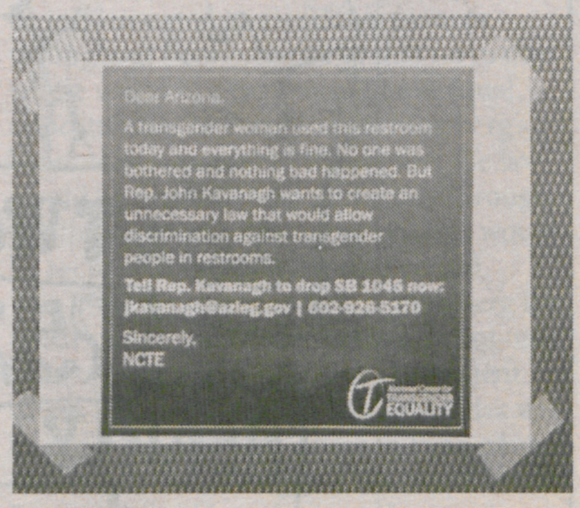
Do you think being gay still matters to voters?

I actually don't think it really does matter anymore to voters. While it may resonate negatively with a few groups in the city, overall the gay community is an active and welcome part of the Harrisburg community. I think the issues that the city faces are so much more important than what my sexuality is. My impression is that my sexuality would be a much bigger deal in the region's more rural, conservative areas than it is here in Harrisburg.

Seems so, doesn't it?

Sign, Sign, Everywhere a Sign

Arizona state Rep. John Kavanagh, who received national attention for promoting a harsh anti-transgender bill aimed at prosecuting transgender people for using a public restroom if their gender appearance didn't match the gender on their identification, has said his effort is indeed "targeting" transgender people, but "only with respect to public accommodations where there is an expectation of privacy". One TV news station dubbed his bill the "Show Me Your Papers Before You Go Potty" bill. When ask: What about the civil rights of a group discriminated against? I don't believe there's a civil right in a place where you have an expectation of privacy," Kavanagh answered. Meanwhile, as the controversy brewed, Out Serve executive director Allyson Robinson was traveling through the Phoenix airport. She left this sign behind. Out Serve is a gay military group.


Dear Arizona,
A transgender woman used this restroom today and everything is fine. No one was bothered and nothing bad happened. But Rep. John Kavanagh wants to create an unnecessary law that would allow discrimination against transgender people in restrooms.
Tell Rep. Kavanagh to drop SB 1045 now:
jkavanagh@azleg.gov | 602-926-5170
Sincerely,
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CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA GAY AND LESB AN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

publisher's note

What Would a Manly-Man Do?

Frank Pizzoli

All the elements of our nation's financial challenges were there in plain view. On the front page of the March 29 Wall Street Journal the headlines told the story.

"Stocks Climb Past a Fresh Milestone" told readers that after a four-year, zigzag of a fight, the Standard & Poor's 500-stock index had pushed to a new all-time high – 1569.19.

Another headline told us that "Texan's Plan Put Wall Street on Edge". Why? A candidate for political office during his first congressional bid a decade ago, Jeb Hensarling, answered the question if he was "pro business" by saying: "No. I'm not pro-business. I'm pro-free enterprise."

And therein is a distinction not often made, at least not by the corporate business community.

Pro business means lobbyists pass around lots of money in order to be sure that all profit is privatized and that all loss is socialized. That means if a corporation makes money, they (privatize) keep it. If they loose money, they use taxpayer funds (socialize) to cover their losses. Think bailout.

Pro-free enterprise means that a business lives with the decisions it makes, good or bad. If corporate Titans extol the virtues of Adam Smith's invisible hand doing its work in the marketplace, they cannot later bat away that hand as they make a grab for taxpayer funds to cover losses incurred by their own decisions. It's not the same as renting a car where you get to trade up. It's about accepting the consequences of your decisions.

Using taxpayers' money to cover losses is not the Manly-Man way. And now, as the new the new chairman of the House financial services committee, Hensarling wants to limit taxpayers' exposure to banking, insurance and mortgage lending by, as the WSJ says, "unwinding government control of institutions and programs the private sector depends on."

What? The private sector depends on government programs? We thought that everything government does business does better? Well, that doesn't include socializing their losses due to bad business decisions. See how that works?

One part of the solution gaining ground is a call for higher reserves and/or liquidity accounts. That means risk takers in the global marketplace must keep more of their own money on hand, and in a safe fund, in order to cover their losses. That's one thing government does better than business, keeping enough money on hand to cover losses. Think bailout.

As editor of a business journal in the late 80s, I wrote about the growing pressures then to repeal the Glass-Steagall Act, the law that kept a fire wall between commercial (consumer) banks and investment banks.

Eventually, the sections of the law were repealed and we have seen the dire consequences. All the buzz words taxpayers learned during the 2008 market default – securitization, over-the-counter derivatives, credit default swaps, credit derivatives – all had their beginnings in the efforts to eventually disembowel the banking regulations that protected against hog wild free-for-alls in the marketplace with other people's money.

The current debate on increasing reserves in order to place more risk on the dice rollers and less on taxpayers will be interesting.

We'll hear the wails and cries from corporate America that a larger reserve means less money invested for the overall good of the nation. What that really means is that big time dice rollers will have less casino money with which to gamble. Think real estate fiasco.

Perhaps if investment banks keep more of their own money on hand to cover losses they won't grow too big to fail, but will be big enough to cover their own losses with reserve funds. Isn't that what Manly-Men do?

voice box

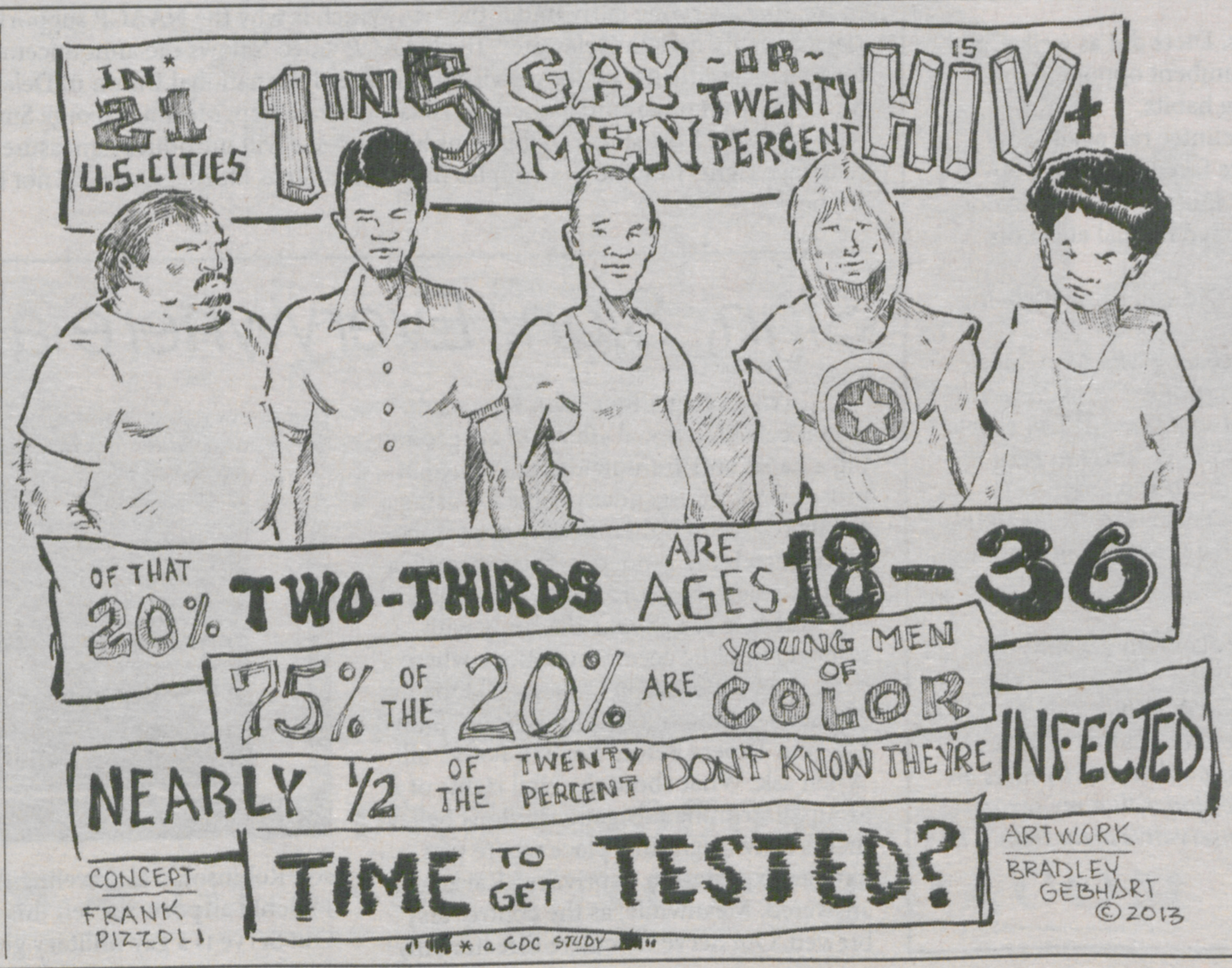
EVERYTHING YOU WRITE IS AMAZING!
Brad Martin, president, Pride Festival of Central PA

We greatly appreciate your continued inclusion of our events in Central Voice!
Kevin Wagner, PR Chair, Harrisburg Gay Men's Chorus

Nadine Smith, executive director, Equality Florida sent this postcard message to US Supreme Court justices: "Justice delayed is justice denied. Please protect my family from the tyranny of those who are hostile at best and indifferent at worst to the discrimination we face. The financial cost is over $400K. The cost to our dignity is incalculable."

From Spiritualwalks, a reader, on thecentralvoice.ning.com story on U.S Senator Robert Casey feeling the heat to come out on lgbt marriage equality…(which he did on April 1)
This was excellent! I was having my doubts about PA but see it's coming much further along than I ever expected towards equality. My partner was disappointed at my decision to stay in my hometown in PA instead of moving where other family was in Buffalo, NY so we could marry legally. I hope it won't be too long before I can fulfill that wish by staying here for her.

E-mail your thoughts to Central VOICE posops@aol.com


IN* 21 U.S. CITIES
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~OR~ TWENTY PERCENT
15 HIV+
OF THAT 20% TWO-THIRDS ARE AGES 18-36
75% OF THE 20% ARE YOUNG MEN OF COLOR
NEARLY ½ OF THE TWENTY PERCENT DON'T KNOW THEY'RE INFECTED
TIME TO GET TESTED?
CONCEPT FRANK PIZZOLI
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* a CDC STUDY

Harrisburg HOPE

Alan Kennedy-Shaffer
Central Voice photo

We are a small city on the Susquehanna, a picturesque town of colorful characters, corrupt politicians, and a capitol dome that rises above it all with an air of seeming indifference to the guns that are killing a generation and the inequities that would drive Jefferson Smith to despair.

"I have been advised by the comptroller that the city of New York has insufficient cash on hand to meet debt obligations due today," Mayor Abraham Beame's speech began. The date: Oct. 17, 1975. The bankruptcy petition was signed; police stood ready to serve the petition on Wall Street; the Daily News screamed: "FORD TO CITY: DROP DEAD." That is how close New York City came to filing for bankruptcy four decades ago. But the speech was never given.

In spite of indifference from federal and state officials, widespread poverty and homelessness, and a blackout in 1977 that seemed to symbolize a city of lights that had gone dark for good, New York City rose from the morass of billions in bad debt and became a poster child for urban renewal. How? Compromise and sacrifice on all sides. Deep pockets loaned the city money, a legendary mayor cut costs and negotiated with the creditors, and the community came together.

Harrisburg, the state capital of Pennsylvania, has an area of 11.4 square miles, a population of 49,673, and debt topping $340 million on a botched incinerator retrofit, making the city a poster child for municipal malfeasance. With an unemployment rate above ten percent, a poverty rate above thirty percent, nearly fifty percent of the city's real estate off the rolls, and more debt per capita than any city in America, Harrisburg is arguably worse off than New York City ever was.

We are a small city on the Susquehanna, a picturesque town of colorful characters, corrupt politicians, and a capitol dome that rises above it all with an air of seeming indifference to the guns that are killing a generation and the inequities that would drive Jefferson Smith to despair. A Supreme Court justice, Turnpike officials, and former legislative leaders fill our prisons. Yet there it is, burning money faster than trash: the incinerator that probably isn't worth half its debt.

Meanwhile, down in Jefferson County, Alabama, local officials file the biggest bankruptcy in history after negotiations with Assured Guaranty Municipal Corporation (AGM) and other creditors fall through. In Stockton, California, federal Judge Christopher Klein admonishes AGM and other creditors for failing to negotiate in good faith. "Negotiation is by definition a two-way street," Klein said. "You cannot negotiate with a stone wall." Is Harrisburg next?

AGM insured Harrisburg's debt in exchange for millions. Consultants were paid, lawyers were paid, engineers were paid, accountants were paid – and city officials were reelected. That is, until Harrisburg's "house of cards" began to collapse and the community began to ask: will there be justice for Harrisburg? At Harrisburg Hope forums, politicians began to talk accountability for those who led the city to the brink. They also promised to hold creditors' "feet to the fire."

A fair solution for Harrisburg will include not only tax increases, asset sales, and other sacrifices from our heavily taxed community but also creditor concessions. Fortunately for Harrisburg, Judge Klein's ruling paves the way for the city to win concessions from AGM and the city's other creditors. Judge Klein's ruling may break new ground not just for Stockton but also for Harrisburg, making bankruptcy the ultimate back stop for communities with little left to lose.

Of course, the best outcome for our diverse city is probably the one that keeps our future out of the hands of a federal judge. Why play roulette when you can play poker? For Harrisburg, that means taking advantage of the groundbreaking decision to allow Stockton to enter bankruptcy by bringing the creditors and the county back to the table. Never underestimate the enduring virtue of necessity. As the poet William Cullen Bryant said, "Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again."

Just as New York City, on the brink of bankruptcy in 1975, survived its brush with financial ruin, similarly will Harrisburg emerge from the ashes of its own incinerator if our community comes together. For too long, we have been held back by our fear that we will fail, that public debate and dialogue will not be enough, that there will never be justice for Harrisburg. Instead, let us remember the speech that was never given about the biggest bankruptcy that was never filed.

Let us hope that Harrisburg finds a balanced solution for the future of our community and that there will be justice for the city.

COMMON CAUSE *Pennsylvania*

Holding Power Accountable

Common Cause/PA Backs Early Voting

Submitted by Common Cause/PA

Rep. Mike Schlossberg recently introduced a bill to expand voting opportunities for Pennsylvania's citizens. Increasingly Pennsylvania has seen long lines at polling places that too often cause people to leave the polling place before voting, material supporting the bill stated. Common Cause notes that 34 states already allow citizens to vote before election day and this has helped to improve voter turnout in those states.

The good government group also indicated concern that Early Voting be implemented in a uniform manner throughout Pennsylvania so that no matter where voters live they would have equal opportunities to vote. Rep. Schlossberg's legislation is careful to ensure that the law would be implemented uniformly throughout the state and that voting systems would be secure for the entire voting period.

"We believe that Rep. Schlossberg has taken care to guarantee that voters not only have opportunities to vote at convenient times, but also that those opportunities will be equal regardless of where in Pennsylvania they live" said Common Cause's Julie Edgar.

Schlossberg Bill Would Give Voters A Week to Vote Before Election Day

At a press conference at The Lehigh County Government Center, Common Cause spokesperson Julie Edgar commended Rep. Mike Schlossberg for his efforts to expand voting opportunities for Pennsylvania's citizens. Edgar said "House Bill 548 will make Pennsylvania's elections considerably more voter-friendly by giving voters a full week to exercise their franchise so that they may vote when they are best able…"

Increasingly Pennsylvania has seen long lines at polling places that too often cause people to leave the polling place before voting. When people are subjected to hours-long lines to vote they can be disenfranchised. Many voters simply give up because they have to go to work, have to pick up a child, or their ride to the polls cannot wait – and many are unable to return.

Common Cause noted that 34 states already allow citizens to vote before election day and this has helped to improve voter turnout in those states.

The good government group also indicated concern that Early Voting be implemented in a uniform manner throughout Pennsylvania so that no matter where voters live they would have equal opportunities to vote. Rep. Schlossberg's legislation is careful to ensure that the law would be implemented uniformly throughout the state and that voting systems would be secure for the entire voting period.

"We believe that Rep. Schlossberg has taken care to guarantee that voters not only have opportunities to vote at convenient times, but also that those opportunities will be equal regardless of where in Pennsylvania they live" said Edgar. Common Cause/PA said it would work to get the measure enacted into law as soon as possible, and urged Pennsylvanians to call their legislators to support the measure.

more voice box

POLITICALLY INCORRECT FOR A CHANGE

I hope everyone who wants to get married does so but enough already. It's not the only way of life. There is a difference between "gay equality" and "gay liberation." Equality before the law should not mean and does not require a slavish devotion to the values of the dominant culture. It does mean one is free from being fired or refused services. Being gay should not mean struggling to become as much like straight people as possible. Becoming mewling sychophants of the heterosexual overlords is not the way to liberation.

A reader

EDUCATION: America's New Civil Right

BY DR. JIM BROUSSARD

Dr. Jim Broussard

Education can and should be America's newest civil rights issue. Today, too many schools are failing too many children. The system is broken, and access to a quality education is largely the province of the wealthy, of those who can afford to opt out of failing government schools in favor of better options.

The poor, immigrants, inner-city children are the ones hurt most by these harsh realities. They are the ones most in need of quality schools but are stuck in under-performing schools where test scores continue to decline and where outdated work rules and union practices make reform nearly impossible.

There are better ways. Vouchers that allow children to attend private schools, the expansion of charter schools, distance learning, and specialty school programs are all ideas whose time has come. It is important to understand that it is not the schools that must change but the educational system itself.

It's a struggle on the order of what America experienced in the 1960s, when the fight over establishing equality under law for all Americans became the watchword of the era. It's time for this fight again, only this time with the goal of equal access to quality education at the center of the debate.

The Chester Community Charter School is a good example of what can happen when people face the problem and take action to overcome it. It started in 1998 with only 97 students. Today, there are more than 3,200 spread across nine state-of-the-art buildings where the lives of thousands of students are being made better while restoring life to the city of Chester, one of the Commonwealth's poorest communities.

Despite the fact that it draws from the same student pool as the rest of the Chester-Upland School District, CCCS has produced consistently superior academic outcomes and placements for its students. This contrasts dramatically with the Chester-Upland School District, which is perennially ranked among the worst school districts in the Commonwealth.

It works because CCCS is different. As a charter school it is free from the kinds of onerous, outdated work rules and regulations that have paralyzed the cause of reform in existing public schools. It brings a different approach to education, one that is paying benefits to all the students who attend. As others have observed, the one-size approach to education no longer fits all. Nor does it have to.

And charter schools are just one option. Directing per-student dollars to families rather than schools so that parents can use vouchers to help pay tuition at private or parochial schools is another. The educational establishment had shown far too often that it cannot reform itself, so the only alternative is for parents, communities, and those who care about the future of our children here in the Commonwealth and across the nation to demand that things be allowed to change.

This means pressuring policy makers to open the system to increased reforms. Pennsylvania and the nation need more charter schools like CCCS and other educational options that will create the educated workforce of young Americans that are needed to be competitive in the global economy, not of the future, but that is here now. It's important to understand that a charter school is a public school, but the decision to form one comes from parents, teachers and the local community, and they have fewer stagnating rules to follow.

These reforms will not happen by themselves. It will take a concerted effort to move the debate from fixing the unfixable, at tremendous cost to the taxpayers, to offering new options for parents who want their children to enjoy greater success than they did. This used to be the American dream; now it's increasingly a pipe dream, as jobs move offshore in search of educated, quality workers and sensible work rules that allow for greater economic success.

The time to turn the tide is now. Where charter schools are in operation the competition to enroll students in them is so intense that school districts often have to resort to lotteries to determine who goes. There should be enough space for everyone who wants to attend, which means we need to expand the number of placements available which, in reality means expanding the opportunities available for our children.

Dr. Jim Broussard writes for Citizens Against Higher Taxes, teaches American history and historiography at Lebanon Valley College and has been published by the Commonwealth Foundation Council of Scholars.

DEP Citizens Advisory Council Asks Public For Ideas On Improving Public Participation

Harrisburg, Pa (March 27)-- The Citizens Advisory Council to the Department of Environmental Protection is asking the public for ideas on how to improve public participation in developing environmental regulations and policies, according to John Walliser, Council Chair.

"The Department of Environmental Protection is now updating the agency's public participation policies which have not seen significant changes in more than a decade," said Walliser. "The Council believes this is a unique opportunity to ask the public for ideas on how they can be better informed about regulations and policies under development and how they can offer their comments and suggestions."

Walliser noted DEP is also updating its public participation policies covering permit reviews and environmental justice reviews, but the Council and the public will be reviewing those changes separately.

"Giving the public-- from individual citizens to affected businesses-- the opportunity to have an impact on regulations and policies developed by DEP is a fundamental principle the agency has embraced," said Walliser. "At the same time, the Council is aware there is always room for improvements."

DEP now has 22 active advisory committees with over 300 members covering issues as varied as waste management, air pollution, coal mine safety, environmental justice, low-level waste disposal and radiation protection, oil and gas management, on-lot sewage systems and water quality.

DEP has also developed tools like the Public Participation Center on its website, its six-month Regulatory Agenda and a Regulatory Update to keep the public informed of regulatory and policy development. In addition, it also publishes proposed regulations and policies in the Pennsylvania Bulletin for review and holds hearings on key proposals.

Through DEP's eNOTICE email notification service, the public can sign-up for email notices of regulations and policies going through the process.

In recent years several issues related to the regulatory and policy development process have been brought to the attention of Council which might help guide the public in making suggestions for improvement:

-- Infrequent updating of advisory committee webpages to include advisory committee agendas and handouts in time for public review before meetings and basic information like committee membership and agency contacts;

-- Lack of public notice for some advisory committee and subcommittee meetings and conference calls;

-- The eNOTICE system could be used more effectively to provide information growing through the regulatory and policy development process; and

-- The lack of a single calendar of upcoming advisory committee and subcommittee meetings and conference calls on the agency's website.

"For the next 30 days we are inviting the public to email the Council their suggestions for improvements to the regulation and policy development process," said Walliser. "The Council will also be contacting each member of DEP's advisory committees for their first-hand suggestions on improving public involvement."

The Council has established a special webpage at: http://goo.gl/UuOEu for background on existing DEP public participation requirements and an email address for submitting improvement ideas: RA-epcontactcac@pa.gov. Public suggestions are due April 26.

"The Council will collect and evaluate all the ideas we receive and forward the recommendations to DEP and the General Assembly," said Walliser.

Walliser noted once formal changes to the regulatory and policy development public participation process are proposed by DEP they will undergo their own comment period managed by the department.

For more information on DEP's Citizens Advisory Council, visit www.dep.state.pa.us and enter Keyword "CAC."

US House Lawmakers Want ENDA Executive Order

President Obama has been called on by 110 U.S. House members to take action to protect LGBT workers from discrimination, known as ENDA or employment Non-discrimination Act. No members of Democratic leadership or any Republican lawmakers have signed the letter.

The letter says: "We believe that a fully inclusive America benefits us all and that sexual orientation and gender identity should never be used to discriminate in employment practices," the letter states. "For that reason, we request that you make signing an executive order that would prohibit federal contractors from discriminating in the workplace based on an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity an initial priority of your second term."

The Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law estimates such an executive order would protect up to 16.5 million workers. Although workplace protections for LGBT people exist in some states, it remains legal in 29 states to fire an employee based on sexual orientation, and legal in 34 states, including Pennsylvania, to fire someone based on gender identity.

Harrisburg Mayor Candidates Answer Questions

Three Harrisburg mayoral candidates answered questions April 8 under the auspices of the Capital Region Stonewall Democrats. Questions were also asked by Anne Van Dyke, Harrisburg Chapter of NOW. From left to right candidates Dan Miller, current city controller; Eric Papenfuse, midtown Harrisburg businessman; and Louis Butts; CRSD president Steve Dorko.

Incumbent Mayor Linda Thompson did not address the group. In an email to Central Voice on the debate, CRSD president Steve Dorko wrote: "Mayor Thompson has never responded to ANY correspondence CRSD has ever sent." Independent candidate Nevin Mindlin, who last election came within 842 of defeating Thompson in the General Election when he ran as a Republican, did also not participate, not having completed the group's questionnaire which is a prerequisite to participation. The political organization's member-determined endorsements are available on their web site - www.capitalstonewall.org

Partial statements:

Question 1: How will you reach out to the lgbt community?

Butts: "Diversity is the key to civility. It starts here, starts today."

Miller: "I've been involved in lgbt activism for 30 years."

Dan Miller

Eric Papenfuse

Louis Butts

Steve Dorko

Papenfuse: Papenfuse called for a "joint endorsement" of himself and Miller. "I supported marriage equality four years ago" when a candidate. He supports a state-level ENDA.

Question 2: Harrisburg has a Human Relations Commission but no staff or budget to enforce its ordinance. How will you strengthen the effort?

Butts: "I will fund with funds from the hydro-electro dam I propose."

Miller: Human Rights Campaign grades cities on the strength of their ordinances. Harrisburg gets a 74% rating. I've already started working with them."

Papenfuse: "I will work to raise funds to support the effort, perhaps a public/private partnership."

Question 3: Parental involvement is important in education. How will you engage more parents? (Note: The mayor of Harrisburg has no official role in the Harrisburg School District, although former Mayor Stephen Reed and then incumbent Mayor Linda Thompson did exercise oversight as head of the Board of Control called for in legislation now defunct.)

Butts: Butts called for "Pennsylvania Men's Commission. We need to be integrated back into the family"

Miller: "I come from a family of educators and will always advocate for strong educational values."

Papenfuse: A former classroom teacher, "I would extend hours in all the libraries" as a way to create safe space. "No issue is more central than nowhere to go."

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Sen. Casey Endorses Marriage Equality; 54 Senators in Favor

By Central Voice

U.S Senator Robert Casey, who had previously backed civil unions for same-sex couples, April 1 announced he was in full support of same-sex marriage. He now believes the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) should be repealed.

MoveOn.Org, one of the organizations which directed efforts at Casey has since indicated their members from Arkansas, West Virginia, South Dakota, North Dakota, and Louisiana are leading campaigns to urge their senators not to be the last Democrat to come out in support of marriage equality.

Still the fight is on.

"Look, the Republican Party isn't going to change," former Sen. Rick Santorum said in an interview. "If we do change, we'll be the Whig Party." Casey defeated Santorum by 17 percentage when he first claimed Santorum's senate seat.

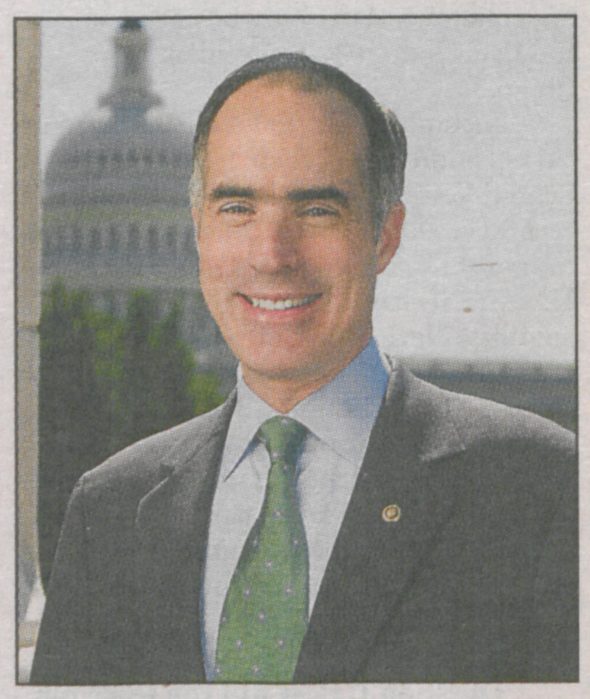
Even with a fierce battle underway, change is occurring.

Illinois Republican Senator Mark Kirk said in his blog: "Same-sex couples should have the right to civil marriage. Our time on this earth is limited, I know that better than most. Life comes down to who you love and who loves you back-- government has no place in the middle." He is the second sitting Republican Senator to come out in favor of marriage equality following Ohio Republican Senator Rob Portman in March.

Freshman North Dakota Sen. Heidi Heitkamp has reversing her previous stance and now says she now supports gay marriage. Senator Joe Donnelly (D-IN) has come out for marriage equality. Democratic Florida Sen. Bill Nelson has reversed his opposition to gay marriage. "It is generally accepted in American law and U.S. society today '... that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.' I believe that. The civil rights and responsibilities for one must pertain to all," he said.

Delaware Sen. Tom Carper also changed his position April 2: "As our society has changed and evolved, so too has the public's opinion on gay marriage – and so has mine." Sen. Tim Johnson (D-S.D.) joined the stampede, leaving just three Senate Democrats who have not voiced support for same-sex marriage.

During the last week of March, Casey's office, according to the activist organizations, received 10,000 calls and emails urging him to support same-sex marriage, according to a press release by Keystone Progress and MoveOn.org. Equality Pennsylvania also joined the effort to move the senator's position with emails to its membership urging calls to Casey. Alex Miller, of Casey's office told Central Voice in an email



Senator Robert Casey

that as of March 29,

"From our records, we had under 1,000 calls in favor of same-sex marriage."

The pressure Casey faced reflected waves of media coverage when on March 26-27 the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments for and against the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and California's Proposition 8, banning same-sex marriage.

Pennsylvania's version of DOMA was passed in 1996 when Tom Ridge was governor. Ridge has since reversed his position as announced Feb. 28 by GOP operative Ken Mehlman and then reported out March 1 by digitaljournal.com's Greta McClain, Michele Nix, of Ridge's office, told Central Voice in an email.

A move by the business community to embrace equality as good for business propelled the issue further. The new Business Coalition for DOMA Repeal, a Fortune 500 effort, supports marriage equality through members like Marriott Corporation, A|X Armani Exchange, Aetna Inc., Biogen Idec, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Diageo North America, eBay Inc., Electronic Arts, Kimpton Hotel & Restaurant Group LLC, Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company, Replacements, Ltd., Sun Life Financial U.S., and Thomson Reuters.

Finally, Pennsylvania's attitudes are changing, according to a February Franklin & Marshall College poll which found that on gay marriage, 52 percent of registered voters approve of same-sex marriage, while 41 percent oppose it. Although not statements of support for marriage equality, in related developments 30 municipalities across the state have anti-discrimination laws, many adopted in the last year.

PA State Representative Brian Sims (D – Phila.) joined the effort to persuade Casey to change his position. He penned an open letter to the Senator urging him to stand up and voice his support for LGBT equality.

Philadelphia Fun

By Frank Pizzoli

Sample land mark restaurants, free jazz, comedy, and nostalgic pop music.

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New Kids on the Block with 98 Degrees and ...

New Kids on the Block 2013 summer tour with 98 Degrees and Boyz II Men, the best-selling R&B group of all time, will opening for NKOTB on their tour, aptly titled The Package. This is the first tour for 98 Degrees in over 12 years!
When - June 15, 7 p.m.
Where - Wells Fargo Center
3601 South Broad Street, Phila.

Daniel Tosh

Comedian Daniel Tosh presents his June Gloom Tour with all his expected antics, twirls and curls on everyday events.
When - June 20, 7 p.m.
Where - Tower Theater,
19 S. 69th Street Upper Darby

Orlando "El Fenomeno" Cruz next to his father after winning his 20th professional boxing match by TKO in the 6th round.

What a Knockout!
Boxer Orlando "El Fenómeno" Cruz Wins 2nd Match Since Coming Out

Puerto Rican featherweight boxer Orlando "The Phenomenon" Cruz (20-2-1, 10KO) defeated Mexican boxer Aalan "The Bomber" Martínez (14-2-1, 9KO) in a 6th round technical knock-out tonight that took place at the Civic Center in Kissimmee, Florida. This is the second fight he wins after becoming the first active professional boxer to ever come out as a gay man back in October

After the fight he thanked his trainers, his friends and "his LGBT community." He also got emotional when mentioning his grandmother - who passed away last year - and dedicated the victory to her. During the fight he wore a multicolor boxing kilt with Puerto Rican flags on both sides. One of the flags was red, white and blue, the other flag's stripes reflected the color of the rainbow as a sign of gay pride.

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Ask Dr. del Sol:

Q: My parents had heart disease, and very bad teeth – is there a relationship between the two?

Tammy del Sol: There are more and more studies showing links between periodontal disease (the oral infection of your gums and the bone that supports your teeth) and heart disease. "Bad teeth" can be defined many ways – but if you mean that they had many teeth extracted because they eventually became loose and infected, then your folks probably were dealing with perio disease. Bacteria that causes perio disease, courses through your blood stream. Researchers have discovered that the periodontal disease-causing bacteria is the same bacteria lined in the arteries of people with heart disease. So yes, there is a link. The exact pathway or relationship between the two is not clear yet. *(Check out more, at WebMD.com)*

Q: I don't want to have heart disease. Are you saying that if I brush and floss I won't get heart disease?

TdS: No, I am not saying that. What I am saying is that there is a link between the two diseases. The verdict is still out on exactly how they are tied to each other. It's kind of like the chicken and the egg mystery. But let's look at it this way: Why contribute to heart disease if we don't have to?? Brush several times a day. Thoroughly. Get a water pik and use it, every day. Eliminate as much bacteria from getting into your blood stream as possible. See your dentist at least twice a year for regular exams and hygiene appointments. Ask them how good a job you are doing with your home care. Ask them to give you tips on how you can do a better job.

Q: My parents had dentures. I guess after you lose all your teeth, you don't have to worry about all that nasty periodontal bacteria in your bloodstream anymore.

TdS: Guess again. I can't tell you how many folks I see who have dentures or partials who do not know how to properly clean them. As a result, those people still have tons of bacteria coursing through their bloodstream from all the debris and plaque left on those dentures. Even though someone may have full dentures, it is still important for them to come in and see their dentist at least once a year so that we can make sure they are taking good care of their denture and cleaning it well. We also like to do a oral cancer screening at that time and make sure everything looks good. Oral cancers, suspicious lesions may still occur after someone gets dentures. Always better safe than sorry.

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New Artist Exhibits at Harrisburg City Gov't Center

Running until June 30, Nichole Mitchell, who calls herself an "urban artist," will have works on display in the Atrium of Harrisburg City Government Center.

A member of The Art Association of Harrisburg, Mitchell will exhibit 10 paintings and five photographs in a entitled "A Glimpse Inside My Mind," with each piece telling a story in a bold, vibrant and often explicit style. Having had a passion for art from an early age, Mitchell says her work is "exotic, mesmerizing, and expressive of [her] raw talent."

Mitchell is graduated from Harrisburg School District, has a Visual Art & Design degree from Harrisburg Area Community College, and is now pursuing a Bachelor of Arts Degree in interior design.

Mitchell is passionate about being "green," often utilizing common household items and recyclables to add extra flare to her mixed-media works. She displays a diverse range of materials in an abstract style which she manipulates with traditional oils and acrylics. She also does freelance photography.

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Nichole Mitchell

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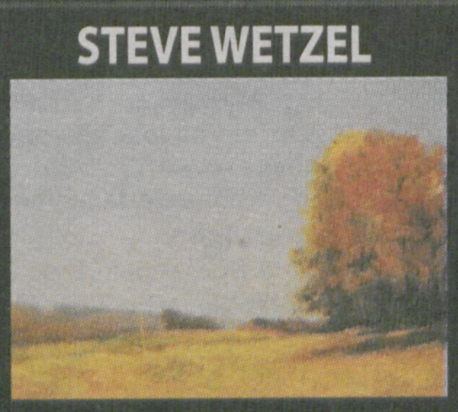
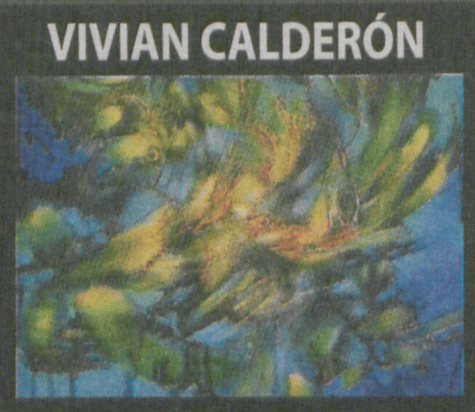


VIVIAN CALDERÓN



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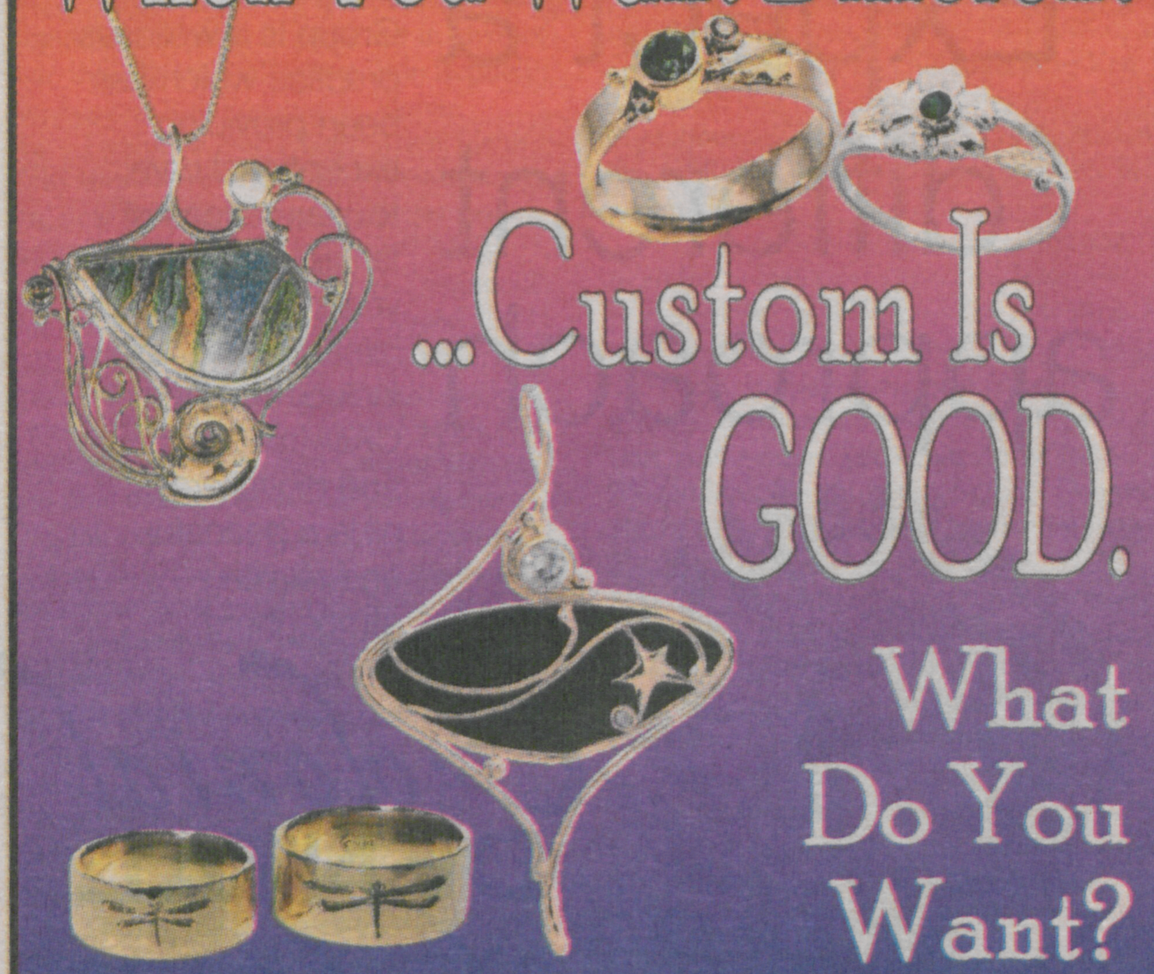

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LGBT community center coalition

By Louie Marven
Executive Director
LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central PA

Center Bolsters Arts & Culture Programming

Curator David Kern and new assistant curator Teddy Maurer continue to highlight art works from our local LGBT community in The LGBT Center Gallery, with opening receptions during Harrisburg's monthly 3rd in the Burg. We're proud to add to this third Friday of the month offering two new monthly cultural activities: LGBT film screenings and an Open Mic Night.

Film Night

Charles King will host a double screening of LGBT-themed films at The LGBT Center on the second Fridays of each month starting at 7 p.m. The films will consist of various genres and highlight diverse LGBT topics, and the evening will include a lively discussion after each film.

Open Mic

Open Mic Night has been underway since March, and has featured local spoken word poets from Dickinson College's spoken word team eXiled, T.L. Waid, and Missi. Local spoken word artists Shaashawn Dial and Tiffany Hwang host the Open Mic Night on the fourth Friday of each month from 7-9 pm. The evening consists of a reading from the featured artist and then an open mic for anyone to share their work - everyone from beginners to seasoned performers are welcome. Feel free to attend and simply listen in! There is a $3 cover.

Our arts and culture programming are excellent opportunities for the whole community to participate in the work of The LGBT Center, celebrate the work of our local LGBT artists, and engage in conversation over topics of interest to LGBT life. Join us at our facility, 1306 N 3rd Street, Harrisburg, to join in on the fun.

LGBT History Project Moving Forward

Our volunteer oral historians are at work beginning to document the history of our local LGBT community. The LGBT History Project collects and presents the stories of LGBT history in central Pennsylvania as told by those who lived them, through written accounts, and video interviews. We also collect and present the photographs, documents and artifacts that illustrate and support these stories.

We will weave these stories and materials together to create a historical timeline and narrative context for LGBT history in central PA. We will present this material on-line as a virtual archive, through exhibits and in presentations. We will also establish a permanent archive of the recordings and other materials. Please contact us via history@centralpalgbtcenter.org or (717) 920-9534 to join this exciting project.

Center Participating in Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community

One way to support our growing work is through the upcoming Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community. The walk is held on Saturday, May 18 at HACC, with check in starting at 7:45 am. The LGBT Center is proud to be one of 41 local nonprofit organizations participating this year. Highmark underwrites the entire event, so 100% of funds raised by center walkers come directly to us to support our mission. Visit www.walkforahealthycommunity.org or more information and to sign up as a walker, form a team, or sponsor an existing walker.

The mission of The LGBT Center of Central PA is to create common ground for the LGBT community and allies in central Pennsylvania by providing services through educational, cultural, and community activities that foster wholeness.

Local Author TL Waid Pens Fiction & Poetry

A Harrisburg native, T.L. Waid has been writing fiction and poetry since her teen years. She is former co-owner of Steelton's Forever Books, which was the first and only LGBT bookstore in the region.

Waid is available for live readings, book signings and book fairs anywhere on the East Coast. Available on Amazon now is "Love and Other Misunderstandings" and "Something Sensual".

Waid tells Central Voice she writes "because I don't have a choice. I am an author inside and out." Her craft will not let her rest, she says. "I write at all times of day and night because I have stories to tell," explaining that "it's not enough to just say something. You have to get it down on paper and breathe life into it." Writing allows Waid to "to express so much more than can be conveyed by mere conversation with people, I reveal more of myself and my ideals to the world."

T.L. Waid

Like all writers, other writers have had an influence. For Waid they include Toni Morrison, Judy Blume, Anne Rice, Maya Angelou and Nikki Giovanni. When people read her writing, Waid hopes that a bond is created. "There is a certain dialogue between authors and readers that is like a bond of love. If what I write about makes you 'feel', than I have touched your life in some small way. That is a great joy to me."

Website: www.waidbooks.com

New Book on Tropical Storm Agnes

Erik V. Fasick, Lemoyne, has written a book on the unprecedented flooding caused by June 1972 Tropical Storm Agnes and the aftermath of damage and destruction it left behind. The 128-page book, including 230 photos, was released recently by Arcadia Publishing of Charleston, South Carolina, as part of its Images of America series.

Fasick, who holds a master's degree in American Studies from Penn State Harrisburg, is a member of the board of directors of the Historical Society of Dauphin County. He presented a narrated program featuring many photos from the book at the John Harris-Simon Cameron Mansion last year to standing-room-only audiences.

"I was only six months old when 'Agnes' came to visit the Susquehanna Valley," says Fasick, "but I've always been interested in what my older family, friends, and neighbors have had to say about the experience."

He began to look through the historical society's collection of photos taken by Patriot-News/Allied Pix photographers, and the idea of making these images available for a wider audience was born.

The book begins with an introduction outlining the progress of the storm, followed by photos of East and West shore communities, then Harrisburg as affected by both the Susquehanna River and Paxton Creek to the east.

The book is available from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday in the office of the Historical Society of Dauphin County, located behind the Harris-Cameron Mansion at 219 South Front Street, Harrisburg, The cost is $21.99. For more information or to reserve a copy, phone 233-3462 or visit www.dauphincountyhistory.org for mail orders.

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Rep. Kim Sponsors Expungement Reform Bill

State Rep. Patty Kim, D-Dauphin, is sponsoring two pieces of legislation with Reps. Jordan Harris and Ronald Waters, both D-Phila., designed to improve efficiency within Pennsylvania's criminal justice system by reforming current laws regarding expungement of criminal records.

"These bills are targeting non-violent offenders and those who had charges never fully processed through the system," Kim said. "I am joining with two of my colleagues with the intent to simplify the expungement process.

"There is a certain expectation that comes with expungement: for an individual to become a law-abiding citizen and not recommit a crime. If we really want to make an impact on lowering the crime rate, we need to have an open discussion about using the tools out there to do it, while at the same time not compromising public safety."

The first bill (H.B. 908) would allow for the expungement of an individual's criminal record after seven years has lapsed from the completion of their sentence and they meet certain criteria.

"There are too many cases in which someone makes a mistake when they're young and it wreaks havoc on their life for years to come," Kim said. "Mistakes someone has already paid for shouldn't hinder their ability to become a responsible adult and contributing member of our communities."

The legislation would require an individual seeking an expungement of their criminal record to appear before a judge to make the request.

"If we don't reform the current system, a completed sentence turns into an indefinite sentence," Kim said. "We are targeting non-violent offenders who are favorable to rehabilitation, who deserve the chance to find gainful employment and housing."

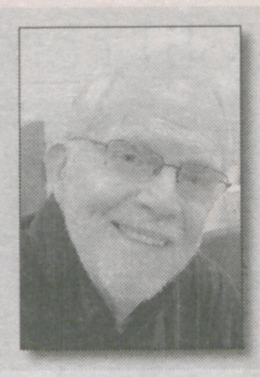
The second bill (H.B. 909) would require the automatic expungement of an individual's criminal record for non-convictions or in cases in which the charges have been dismissed.

Kim notes that under the bill, repositories across the state that are responsible for maintaining information relating to criminal records would automatically expunge non-convictions or dismissed charges after 18 months. If the repositories would fail to do so, they would be held liable for civil damages.

"The benefits of this bill are two-fold: helping ensure due process of the law for individuals who are charged with crimes but never fully had them processed through the system and easing some of the burden on our state's court system by saving time and money," Kim said. "It's time to end this cycle and allow those who deserve a clean slate to be able to get one."

The bills have been referred to the House Judiciary Committee for review.

Ally in the Academy



By Trum Simmons

What does it mean to be educated? Part 2

Don't worry if you didn't read Part 1 last issue, as I can catch you up quickly. In these two columns I simply wanted to weigh in on the question of what an educated American should know in the 21st century and what role a college education has to do with this. And I'm writing from the point of view of a college professor in his last full year of teaching at HACC after 41 years here, ruminating about what it has all added up to.

I began by looking at what colleges call general-education objectives or outcomes, which include the matter of what liberal-arts courses do for a student and, if you are fortunate enough to attend an elite liberal-arts school, is the serious expense worth it? (At HACC, where tuition is low, students don't question the cost, but many wonder why they are required to take courses that "don't have to do with [my] major." What? They need to know something about history or sociology or literature?).

The outcomes I want to talk about this issue are from Drexel University's list, which I referenced last time. So what do we mean by creative and critical thinking, ethical reasoning and responsible citizenship?

Critical thinking, or what simply used to be called thinking, has gotten a lot of press over the past 30 years. It's sad that we had to come up with the term critical thinking, because it shows that good, solid thinking had all but disappeared from view, not just in the vast wasteland of TV, but in public discourse at all levels.

Thinking something through, thinking below the surface, unpacking complex theories and arguments, taking the time to toss ideas around in your mind without any hurry to come to a conclusion: This is what we mean by critical thinking.

Michel de Montaigne's essays were an attempt to do just this—to essay for him meant to try out ideas to see how worthy they are, to look at them from multiple perspectives. And no, you do not need a college education to learn how to think this way.

Of course, given the pace of life today, including time spent on the Internet and social media where so many of us are hurrying from one website and post to another to get our own views out there, making the time to try out ideas is not easy. And since our political leaders constantly tell us in short sound bites exactly how things are, speaking as though they were standing on Mount Olympus, who wants to answer a difficult question with "I don't really know; I have to think about that?"

I'm not sure what to say about creative thinking, because we just don't know much about how someone comes up with a fresh, new idea. "I was sitting there and suddenly I had an idea," someone says. Who knows where that idea came from? Yes, we should try to "think outside the box," but just what does that mean? In my experience it too often means the person asking you to do this simply wants you to think inside their box instead of yours.

I could write a whole column on ethical reasoning, so let's just say this. In a society that spends so much time on legal reasoning, we need to recognize that our laws are rooted in ethics and morality. My mentors Henry David Thoreau, Mahatma Ghandi and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. modeled the kind of ethical thinking we need today. The law in general is fine, except that an unjust law is not. Good critical and ethical thinking will help us uphold justice and fight the injustice that continues to pervade the United States of America in 2013.

Well, I guess I could write another whole column on responsible citizenship, and perhaps I will. But this learning outcome is a good place to end our look at what it means to be educated, as much of the rhetoric on citizenship concentrates on a person's need to follow the rules, make sure you fit into the established norms, and don't spend much time questioning mainstream values.

If that's responsible citizenship, then we're in trouble. A citizen who wants to be responsible will first have to figure out what is going on. You can't respond to something you don't understand, or at least you can't respond effectively. And if you look around and see that what's happening in your life and the life of the nation is not so good, that things are not nearly as wonderful as our leaders say they are, then being responsible means raising a lot of questions and thinking hard about how to come up with solutions to problems.

Damn! There's no room left for more hard thinking, and perhaps that's OK. My head hurts from sitting at the keyboard trying to exercise my mind. Oh—perhaps I should have said something about this long ago. Yes, becoming educated is not easy, and yes, it will lead to headaches.

And these headaches are so worth it.

Trum Simmons is senior professor of English at Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) and adviser of The Fourth Estate, the Harrisburg campus student newspaper. He also advises HACC Allies, the LGBTQA student organization.

New Effort Underway to Track Local Ordinances

By Frank Pizzoli

Jason Landau Goodman

With 30 municipalities in the state now home to anti-discrimination ordinances, a new network of activists, advocates, and allies has formed.

Known as the Suburban and Rural Alliance of Pennsylvania (SARA), the network founders are local community advocates who spearheaded passage of local non-discrimination ordinances in communities across the state, says Jason Landau Goodman, who serves as the alliance's web master. The group first met in 2010. Earlier Goodman founded Equality Lower Merion and later headed the Pennsylvania Student Equality Coalition.

The alliance, Goodman explains, "allows for local advocates to connect and discuss issues they have or are experiencing" as they advocate for lgbt civil rights. "We also collaborate on how to help advocates engaging in this work."

Essentially, the group's mission is to expand employment, housing, and public accommodations protections for LGBT Pennsylvanians. With 30 ordinances, many passed in the last two years, Pennsylvania has the most local nondiscrimination ordinances ever enacted by one state, according to SARA's web site.

As of January 2013, the Human Rights Campaign reports there are 166 local non-discrimination ordinances in the US that are inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity. Every nondiscrimination ordinance in Pennsylvania includes both sexual orientation and gender identity

The effort now has about 20 municipalities represented, all volunteers. "We do not have officers. We have rotated meeting facilitators. I act as the webmaster to ensure material is posted quickly to the website," Goodman says.

Info: http://sarapennsylvania.org; sarapennsylvania@gmail.com

Lancaster events

MAY

A FORMAL REALIST: THE WORKS OF JOHN DUBROW
Until 5/10/2013
The Demuth Museum's exhibition and catalog will showcase the work of contemporary painter John Dubrow, in an expansive mid-career retrospective including urban scenes, landscapes and self-portraits from the start of his career in the 1980s to his most current work. Regular Museum hours: Tues-Sat 10-4 and Sunday 1-4. Opening Reception: March 1, 5-8pm. The Demuth Museum, Lancaster, (717) 299-9940.

THE LAND OF FIRE AND ICE
Until 6/1/2013
Thirty travelers braved wind and rain to see the mid-Atlantic ridge, the wild city of Reykjavik and to live the sagas. This photography exhibit showcases images captured from these travelers' experiences. This exhibit is on display at the North Museum of Natural History & Science. Admission to this exhibit is included in the price of admission to the museum. Admission is $7.50 for adults, $6.50 for children (3-17). Planetarium programs are an additional $2.00 per person. Admission is FREE to museum members. North Museum of Natural History and Science, Lancaster, (717) 291-3941.

JUNE

CONRAIL DAYS
Until 6/9/2013
Conrail arose from the wreckage of six failed railroads in the 1970s to become a profitable and successful private enterprise. This program highlights the equipment, history and people of Conrail, and is presented in partnership with the Conrail Historical Society. Railroad Museum Of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, (717) 687-8628.

FIRST FRIDAY
6/7/2013
Thousands celebrate the arts in Lancaster every First Friday. Galleries, museums, artist studios, artisans, unique shops and restaurants extend their hours. Downtown Lancaster, (717) 291-4758.

Being Transgender Is No Longer An Illness

The End of Transgender as a Mental Illness

Dana Beyer

The march forward for trans civil rights proceeds apace, its momentum unflagging. It was one year ago this week that Judge William Pryor of Alabama, a man not known for his sympathies for the LGBT community, stated in the 11th Circuit Federal Court of Appeals in Atlanta that trans persons were a protected class under the 14th Amendment. Now the Board of Trustees of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) has ratified the DSM-5, the fifth edition of what is known colloquially as the "psychiatrists' bible," so as of Dec. 1 trans persons are no longer classified by the medical community as mentally ill, this decision coming 39 years after homosexuality was declassified as a mental illness by the same organization.

I have personally been involved in many civil rights campaigns, but as a physician, none has mattered more to me than this one. The fact that my medical colleagues now better understand basic human sexual biology is a source of both relief and pride. I can recall prowling the psychiatric literature in the stacks of the Uris and Olin libraries at Cornell and the medical library at Penn, finding only the most egregiously vile descriptions of who I was as a human being. I recall making surgical rounds at Pennsylvania Hospital in 1976 and listening to the disparaging remarks made by attending physicians and students alike about a trans woman who had just undergone genital reconstruction. I recall the hate speech of opponents to trans anti-discrimination bills in the halls of Congress, Annapolis and Rockville, Md., constantly harping on the supposed mental illness of the gender-nonconforming and the threat we posed by our very existence.

Don't underestimate the significance of this evolution. That we no longer have to take such talk seriously in the legislatures and courts and can roll our eyes as we do when fundamentalists chatter on about gay men showering with straight ones is a hugely positive change. That we now have the gender identity consultation staff at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine speaking out forcefully for comprehensive civil rights protections when not long ago we lived with the reality that Hopkins, with the infamous Emeritus Professor Paul McHugh as its spokesperson, was in the vanguard of denying trans women their humanity is remarkable progress. This is part of the cultural change that influences courts and legislatures, which, in turn, dialectically influence the culture. As an example, it would not be a reach to believe that the leadership of the corporate community on LGBT equality in Atlanta had a salient impact on Judge Pryor. Nor would it be hard to imagine that the quiet, dignified work of physicians Greg Lehne, Bill Reiner, Chris Kraft and others at Hopkins influenced the antediluvian opinions of Paul McHugh and his colleagues.

When the closing bell is rung, we should remember those who toiled through the decades with little expectation of recognition or success. Just as President Obama's support of the trans and gay communities these past four years was only the final push of sufficiency needed to create so much change, this landmark achievement would not have been made possible without the yeomanly work of so many.

A few whom I feel are particularly noteworthy of mention are Jack Drescher, M.D., who has long been active on LGBT concerns within the APA, Edgardo Menvielle, M.D., who led the workgroup of the Washington Psychiatric Society which rewrote the gender dysphoria text and on which I was honored to serve, and Roger Peele, M.D., Chief Psychiatrist for Montgomery County, Md., a strong advocate for the trans community on the Board of Trustees of the APA. We all owe a great deal to Kelley Winters, Ph.D., who has been the conscience as well as the motivating force in the campaign to depathologize the state of being transgender.

I don't want to leave the impression that the job is complete. Just as the removal of homosexuality in 1973 was partial, the exclusion not completed until 1987, there is still work to be done for the broader trans community. The DSM still dehumanizes garden-variety cross-dressing under the category "transvestic fetishism" particularly insulting in its use of the term "fetish." And there are many activists who feel that the APA didn't go far enough and oppose the mention of any form of cross-gender behavior in the DSM, including the new category"gender dysphoria."

Still, while for many people the devil will be in the details, in its larger sociopolitical impact this ranks with the major declassification of homosexuality in 1973. Our greatest accomplishment on the Working Group was reconceptualizing the state of "being trans" from a mental illness to a normal human variant. Now accepted by the American psychiatric community (and years ago by the psychological), this conceptualization defangs the most potent arguments of the opposition, which often portrays trans women as sexual predators. Back in 1990 trans persons were lumped together with pedophiles in the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), reflective of a common misperception that trans women were inherently deceptive and fraudulent, monstrous beings whose only purpose was sexual assault on the innocent. This new edition of what passes for the consensus of the medical community regarding issues of sexuality finally brings trans persons into the light with the rest of the community of humanity.

Chamber on the move

By Bill Krenz, Vice President

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Chamber

The Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce has a business listing at its website - www.cpglcc.org.

Organizations

Look for business ads in your favorite LGBT non-profit's program brochures or donor lists, such as the Harrisburg Gay Men's Chorus or the Central Pennsylvania Womyn's Chorus.

Eat dinner at gay-friendly Mangia Qui. Know the gay bars in your community.

Consider placing money at Members 1st Federal Credit Union, the chambers first corporate sponsor.

Eat Hershey chocolates! The chamber and other organizations hold annual dinners in Hershey facilities. Go play at Hershey Park. These folks are also corporate investors in the chamber.

Do business with a gay lawyer or an LGBT friendly car dealer like Faulkner Subaru who advertises in Central Voice.

continued on page 27

Central PA Womyn's Chorus:
May 11 Breakfast & June 1-2 Concerts

Central PA Womyn's Chorus mounts two events for May and June.

May 11 is their Chorus Breakfast, Rummage Sale, and Celebration of Moms at Colonial Park United Church of Christ, 5000 Devonshire Road (behind Best Buy), from 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. Cost is $5 adults; kids under 6 eat free.

The popular event is the group's annual pancake breakfast. Chorus members cook blueberry pancakes, scrambled eggs, pork and turkey sausage, and fresh fruit bowl, coffee and tea. In honor of Mother's Day, moms receive a free carnation.

Following breakfast is the chorus's legendary rummage sale and raffle baskets, and a chance to purchase discounted advance tickets for the chorus's next performance June 1-2.

June 1-2 Concert

The Central PA Womyn's Chorus June 1-2 presents "Babes on Broadway: The Sequel". The full chorus, soloists and small groups will perform much-beloved show tunes, from The Pajama Game's "Steam Heat" to Tarzan's "You'll Be in My Heart" to "Popular" from Wicked to a "Sister Act" medley.

An all-American dinner precedes the concert at 6:30 pm on Sat., June 1, Colonial Park United Church of Christ, Devonshire Road. The June 1 concert begins at 8 p.m. The musical program will be repeated June 2, 3 p.m. at the Unitarian Church on Clover Lane, Harrisburg. Tickets for the Saturday dinner and concert are $17 in advance, $20 at the door; the Sunday concert-only tickets are $12 in advance, $15 at the door. Info: www.cpwchorus.org or 717-564-0112.

The chorus is a volunteer group embracing diversity by bridging the gaps caused by prejudices. Open to all women, the chorus performs an eclectic repertoire including standard concert pieces as well as traditional and contemporary music that reflect women's lives. New singers are invited to join the group meeting Monday nights 7-9 p.m. at Colonial Park United Church of Christ, 5000 Devonshire Road, Harrisburg (behind Best Buy).

Harrisburg Gay Men's Chorus:
"Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Laughter" June 7-9

The popular chorus pays tribute to some of America's greatest men's choral music composers. From the classical styles of Aaron Copland and Randall Thompson to pop renditions of Bernstein and Doc Pomus, the concerts are perfect entertainment for family and friends to hear songs that have inspired generations.

The concert features works that represent Irish, Shaker, Spiritual and other styles which have come to define America as a true melting pot of cultures. But what men's choral concert would be complete without a few sailor songs? And even a visit from our very own lovely "ladies!"

Guest conductor Jordan Markham has designed a program that is sure to entertain as well as inspire.

The chorus' mission continues to be one of inclusion and of education for new audiences while continuing the tradition of fusing humor and sentiment to create an unforgettable musical experience.

Performances are June 7, 8 p.m.; June 8, 8 p.m.; and June 9, 2 p.m. at Theatre Harrisburg's Krevsky Production Center, 513 Hurlock Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110.

Info: http://www.harrisburgmenschorus.org or 717-236-3809

REVIEWS | *BOOKS DVDs CDs*

ASHLEY ALLEN

There are always assumptions people can make when they don't dig a little deeper to find the truth. One could think an ambitious singer with a music industry dad got Ashley Allen a deal handed to her, when in fact all she got was a strong work ethic instilled in her. Or one might think that growing up a bit above the norm means you don't have a trouble in the world, when it fact trouble was her middle name growing up. One could also think that a pretty blonde who likes to have fun and sings upbeat pop songs has nothing deeper to say.

ICONA POP

Icona Pop are a Swedish DJ and synthpop duo formed in 2009 with electro-house, punk and indie-pop music influences. Members Caroline Hjelt and Aino Jawo, who grew up in Stockholm, create music "which you can both laugh and cry with at the same time". They signed to TEN Music Group in 2009. Their biggest hit has been "I Love It", written by Patrik Berger, Linus Eklöw and Charlotte Aitchison, also known as Charli XCX. The duo received international attention following their debut single "Manners", which was released by Neon Gold on French Kitsuné Music, and the extended-play album Nights Like This on English Mercury Records. Since September 2012, the duo have been based out of Los Angeles, California, and New York City, New York.

Susquehanna Chorale Debuts at New High Center & Chautauqua Institution

Central Pennsylvania's critically acclaimed Susquehanna Chorale, directed by award-winning conductor Linda L. Tedford, the ensemble's founder and artistic director, continues its season with three performances of "Sojourn," a program offering a mix of styles that explore the journey of new life and rebirth.

This year's concerts will include a spring debut performance at the new High Center for Worship and the Performing Arts at Messiah College and a summer performance by invitation at the Chautauqua Institution in New York.

Centering around one theme, each piece in the Susquehanna Chorale's spring concert repertoire is selected specifically to transport audiences from everyday cares and uncertainties, as if leading listeners on a journey or "sojourn" to a place that settles and calms the mind. Highlights include Mendelssohn's "Denn er hat seinen Englen befohlen" and Pachelbel's "Nun danket alle Gott"; Carly Simon's soulful "Let the River Run"; "Ubi Caritas" and "The Ground" by acclaimed contemporary composer Ola Gjeilo; Billy Joel's "Lullaby" and "When the Saints Go Marching In," sung with the audience.

Performances will take place on Friday, May 10 at 8 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 64 West Chocolate Ave., Hershey; on Saturday, May 11 at 8 p.m., High Center, Messiah College, One College Ave., Grantham; and on Sunday, August 4 at 2:30 p.m., Amphitheater, Chautauqua Institution, One Ames Ave., Chautauqua, N.Y. For information about the Chautauqua performance, call 1.800.836.ARTS or visit www.ciweb.org.

To reserve tickets for May performances of "Sojourn," call the Messiah College Box Office at 717-691-6036. For information about the Chautauqua performance, call 1.800.836.ARTS or visit www.ciweb.org.

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85th Annual International Juried Exhibit May 18

The Art Association of Harrisburg's 85th Annual International Juried Exhibition premiers with a reception May 18, 6 -9 p.m. hosted by Jeff and Jane Wiles, and Kathy Marley-Dunbar. Exhibition sponsors are David W. Volkman, Tracey Meloni, Carole Forker-Gibbons, Anne Davis, and Nancy Bartolomaei-Olson.

The Barrie Spessler Jazz Duo will provide the musical ambiance for the reception.

Central Pennsylvania artists predominate in the roster of 68 accepted artists this year, with only three other states represented – Montana, New York and Maryland. As has been the case in previous Juried Exhibitions in recent years, photography reigned supreme. Twenty-four of the accepted works are photographs, with 17 oils, 5 drawings and pastels, 6 sculptures, 5 acrylic paintings, 8 mixed-media works, and only 3 watercolors.

The juror for the exhibition this year was Lee Stevens, Retired Senior Curator, Art Collections, The State of Pennsylvania. Entries for the exhibition were received from across the US, with Ms. Stevens selecting the 68 accepted works for the show in March, and then choosing the prizewinners after the show was installed. The prizes will be presented to the winning artists at 7 p.m. at the reception on May 18.

Prize sponsors for the exhibition include: Tracey Meloni, Oils & Acrylics, Watercolours; Alan Hostetler Insurance, Sculpture & Ceramics; ShowcaseNow, Prints & Graphics; Mark Everest, Occupational Athletics, Photography; David W. Volkman, Other Media; and David Volkman and Susquehanna Bank, Best of Show.

The exhibition will remain on view in the galleries at 21 North Front Street, Harrisburg, through June 20, gallery hours are 9:30 a.m.- 9 p.m. Mon.-Thurs.; 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Fri.; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sat.; 2-5 p.m. Sunday.

There is no admission charge to visit the AAH galleries.

Info: www.artassocofhbg.com; 717-236-1432

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Lancaster PA PRIDE June 15, 2013

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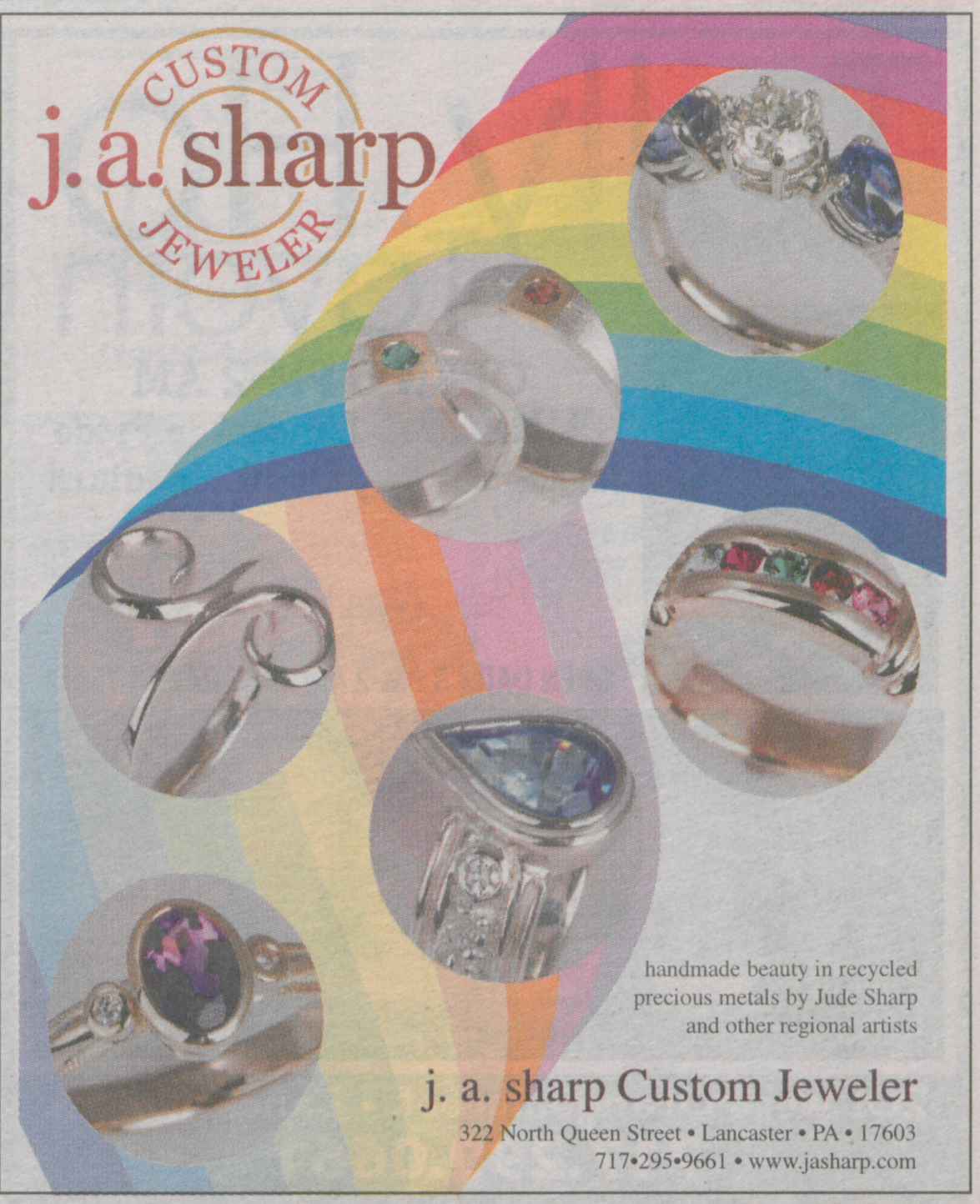

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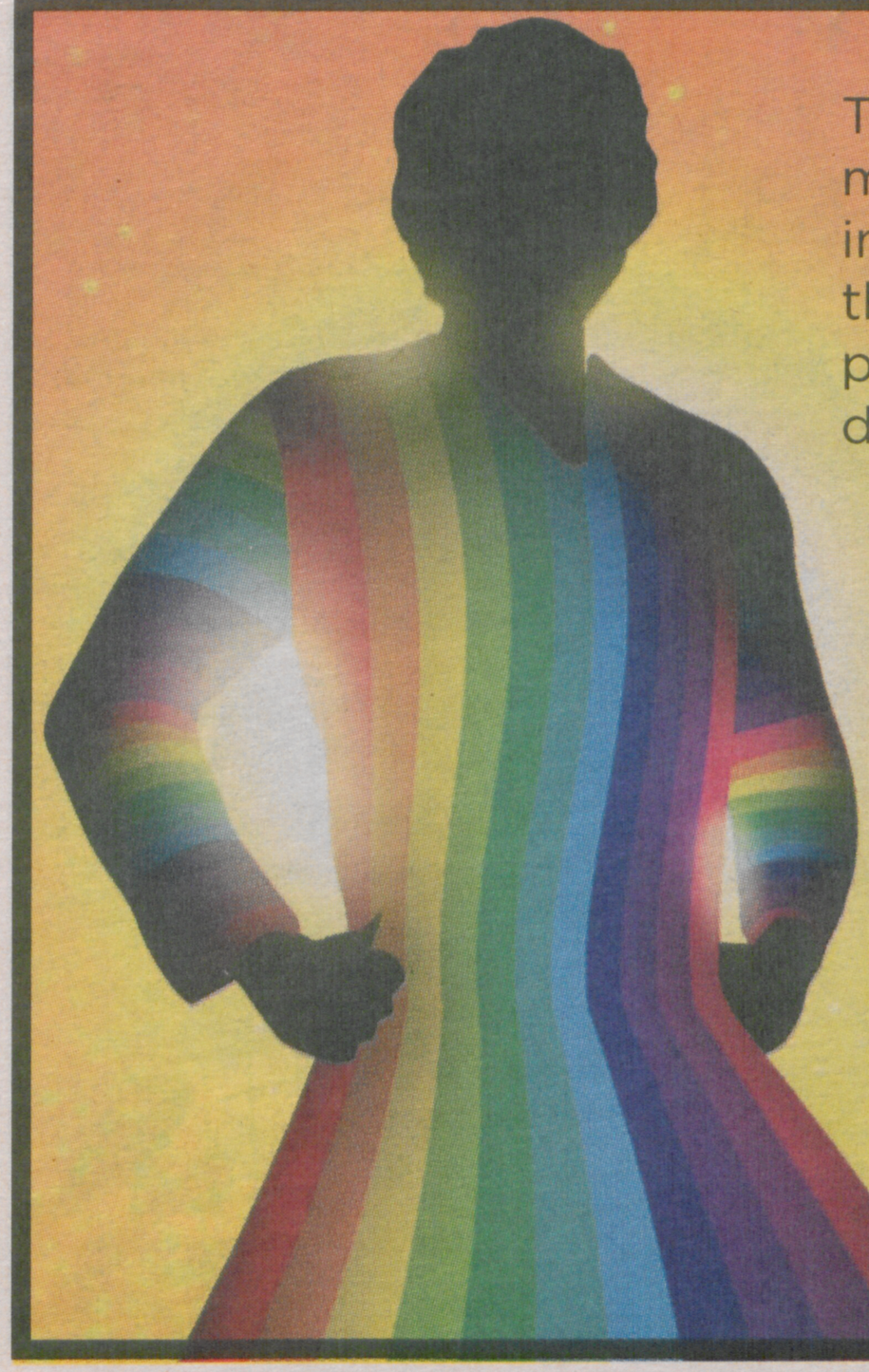

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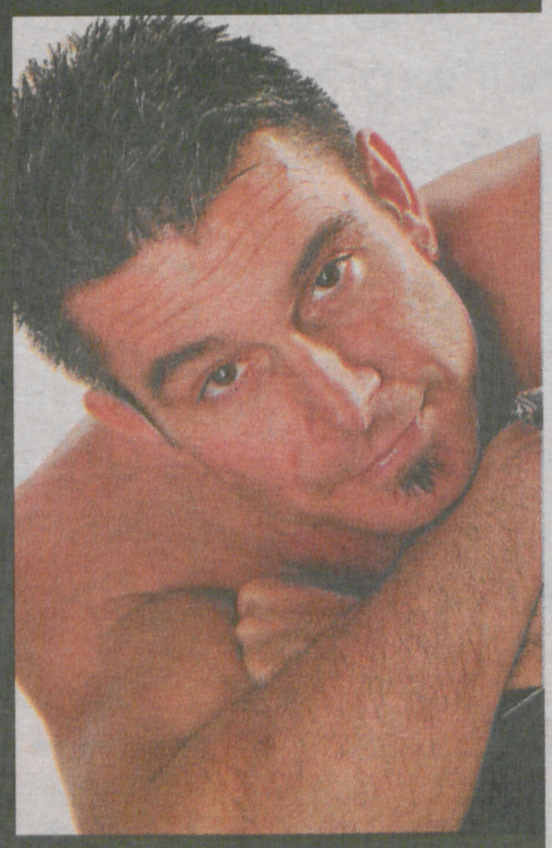

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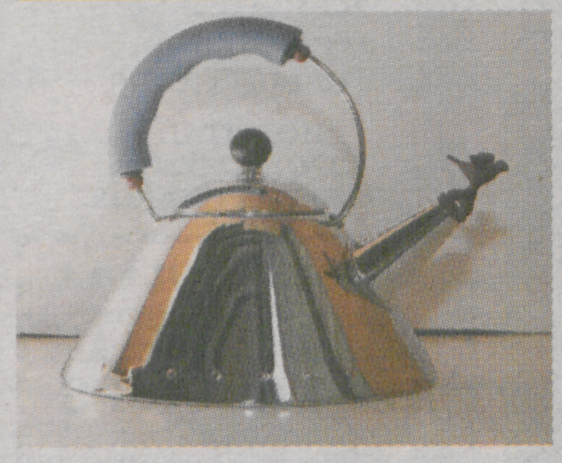

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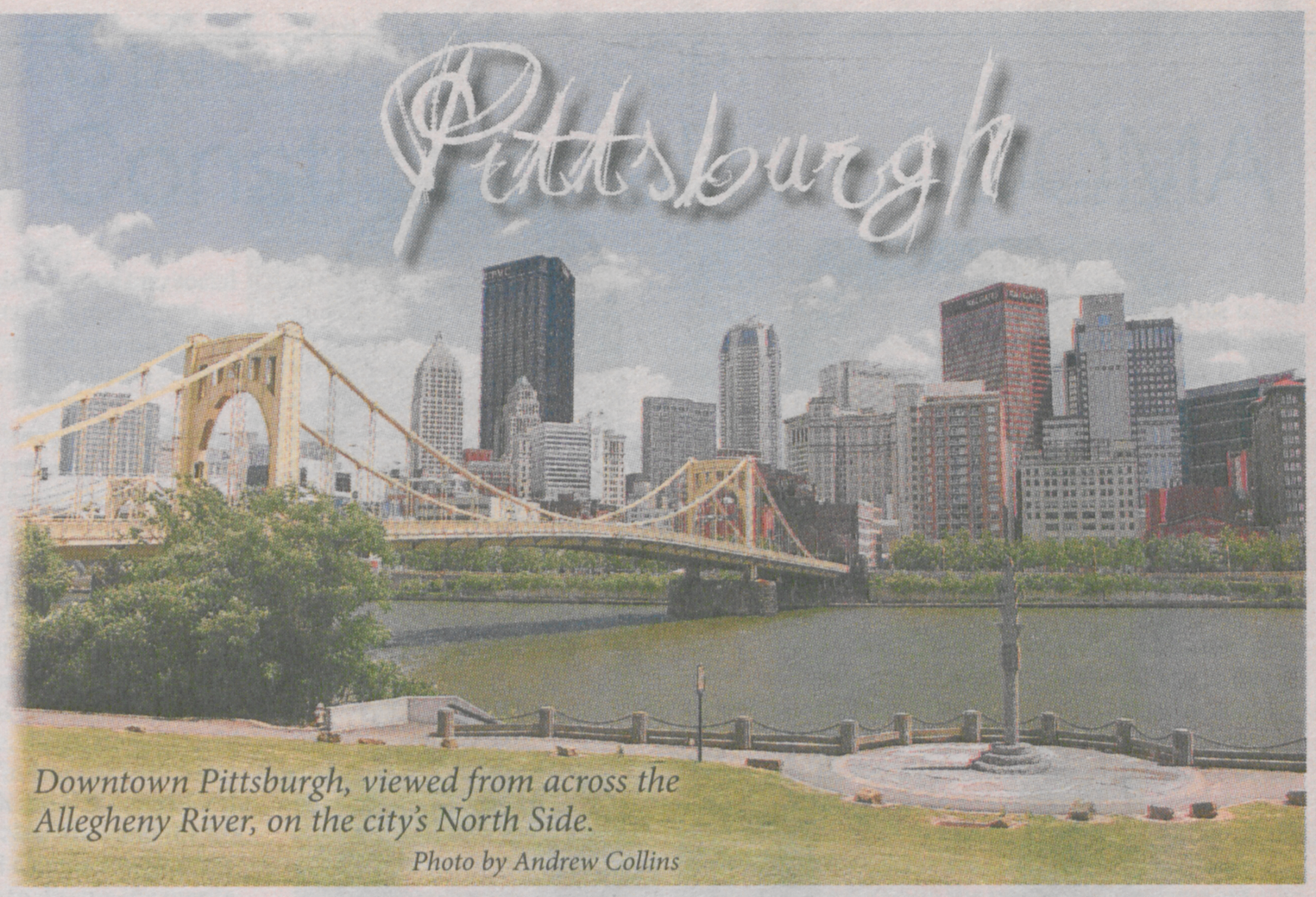
OUT OF TOWN
by Andrew Collins

Pittsburgh



Downtown Pittsburgh, viewed from across the Allegheny River, on the city's North Side.
Photo by Andrew Collins

Once one of the country's preeminent industrial powerhouses, with a population of nearly 700,000, Pittsburgh (visitpittsburgh.com) has - like many similar American cities - changed considerably over the past few decades. Although now less than half the size as during its heyday, this hilly and historic metropolis in the Ohio Valley is enjoying a dramatic renaissance, with a number of formerly downcast neighborhoods now abuzz with hip restaurants, indie shops, and rehabbed factory buildings, apartments, and row houses. Having received a bump in gay visibility during the year's it served as the setting of TV's Queer as Folk (which was actually filmed in Toronto), Pittsburgh has also steadily developed into a very popular weekend destination among LGBT travelers.

Once the nation's leader for mining and metals manufacturing, Pittsburgh has re-emerged as a thriving center of health and medical research, education, and computer software industry. Air and water pollution have been largely eradicated, and many former industrial sites now house cultural attractions.

Gays and the arts

The gay community is well-integrated within the mainstream population. The city has numerous theaters with artsy and gay-themed films and a high appreciation of alternative culture - consider that two of its top attractions are the Mattress Factory contemporary art museum and the Andy Warhol Museum. Also, the city hosts the well-attended Pittsburgh International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival over 10 days in October, and the fast-growing Pride Theater Festival over two weekends in June.

Although, downtown contains but a fraction of metro Pittsburgh's top attractions, its handsome, contemporary skyline strikes a regal pose over the confluence of the Ohio, Allegheny, and Monongahela rivers. You can't miss the city's most remarked-upon skyscraper, PPG Place, a neo-Gothic monolith designed by the late gay architect, Philip Johnson. Near here, Liberty and Penn avenues form the spines of a 14-block Cultural District of theaters and performance halls housing the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Pittsburgh Ballet, and the Pittsburgh Opera. You'll also find numerous theaters, including the gay-popular Cabaret at Theater Square, where you can enjoy cocktails and tapas while taking in a show.

Penn Avenue continues into the historic Strip warehouse district, which has several nightclubs and restaurants interspersed among produce and food markets, and offbeat shops. The neighborhood is also home to the superb Sen. John Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center. The neighborhood leads northeast into the cool 16:62 Design Zone, home to boutiques, home-furnishings shops, and galleries.

Pittsburgh's North Side lies just across the Allegheny River from downtown and is

continued on page 29

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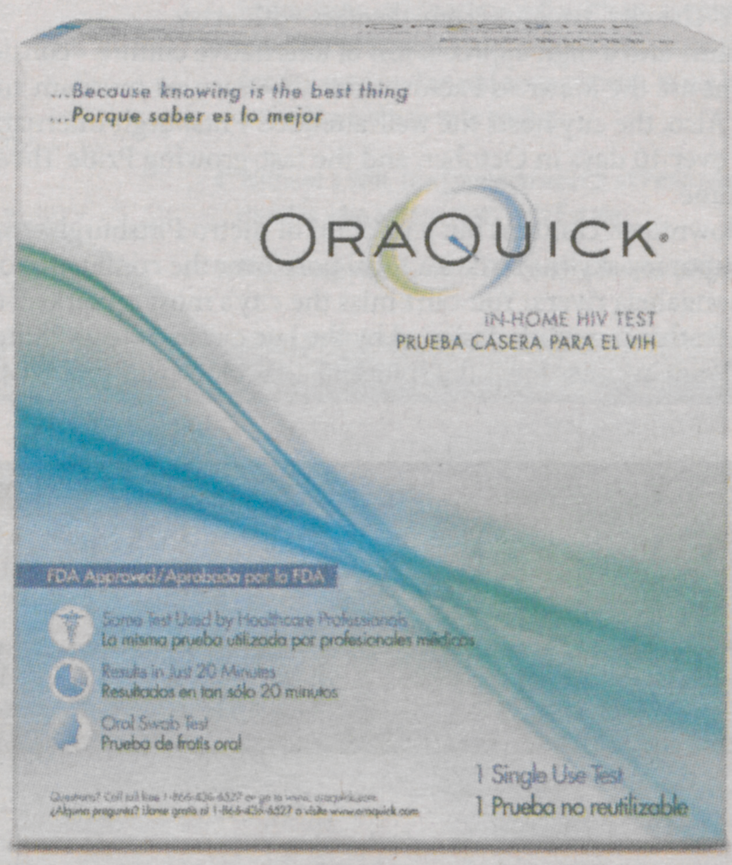
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United States v. Windsor: Challenging the Constitutionality of DOMA

By Leo L. Dunn

This New York case currently being decided by the Supreme Court of the United States asks "whether Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act, 1 U.S.C. § 7, violates the Fifth Amendment's guarantee of equal protection of the laws as applied to persons of the same sex who are legally married under the laws of their state."1

Currently, Section 3 of the federal DOMA makes it illegal for the federal government to recognize a same sex marriage for any federal purpose. This means the 1,100 plus federal benefits and burdens attached to marriage are not applicable to married same sex couples. Some of the major ones are filing a joint tax return, exemption for the federal estate tax, social security death benefits, and taxation of health insurance covering a spouse based on such insurance being imputed income to the employee.

Windsor's challenge to DOMA is based on the federal government imposing a $363,053 estate tax on Ms. Windsor when her wife died. The couple had been together for 44 years and were married in Canada in 2007. Ms. Windsor's spouse died in 2009 leaving her entire estate to Ms. Windsor. The State of New York recognized their marriage but the IRS did not due to DOMA. If the federal government had recognized the marriage, the estate tax would have been $0. Ms. Windsor has won favorable decisions in both the U.S. Court for the Southern District of New York and the U.S. Court for the Second Circuit.2

I am not going to discuss the merits of the case. All of the filings and arguments may be found online if you are interested in reading them – simply search 'United States v. Windsor.' This article focuses on the possible outcomes depending on how the Supreme Court rules.

First, the court could decide that DOMA Section 3 is constitutional. If that happens, then nothing changes regarding federal recognition of valid same sex marriages.

Second, the court could decide the case is not properly before it and they cannot make a ruling on the case. This would leave the question of constitutionality of DOMA Section 3 nationally to another day. However, it would leave the Second Circuit's decision intact and require the federal government to recognize and treat same sex marriages within the Second Circuit's jurisdiction the same as opposite sex marriages. Additionally, it would leave a similar decision by the First Circuit intact and allow for other U.S. Circuit Courts to reach the same conclusion. A similar case in the Third Circuit has been placed on hold until Windsor is decided.

Third, the court could decide DOMA Section 3 is unconstitutional in regards to valid same sex marriages where the couples involved reside in states that recognize their marriages. This would restrict the federal government to recognizing same sex marriages based on the state of domicile.

Fourth, the court could decide DOMA Section 3 is unconstitutional in regards to valid same sex marriages regardless of where the couples involved reside. This would allow any same sex couple to get married in a recognition state and reside wherever they want. A couple living in a non-recognition state would have their marriage recognized for all federal purposes but may not have their marriage recognized for any state purpose.

Fifth, the court could decide that DOMA in its entirety is unconstitutional. If this happens, all valid same sex marriages would be recognized by the federal government. It would also imply that all states should recognize valid same sex marriages performed elsewhere. However, this is not a foregone conclusion because states do not have to recognize marriages performed elsewhere if the marriage offends an important state interest. A current example is that a state does not have to recognize a marriage between first cousins that was validly performed in another state.

If the court makes any decision except for the first described, it would mean that at least some married same sex couples would have their marriages recognized by the federal government. In any of these decisions the result might be made retroactive to when DOMA was signed. Using the four examples cited previously, here is how couples would be impacted at the personal level.

Joint Federal Tax Filing

Same sex couples would be able to file jointly. This means they could combine incomes and deductions. In the case of a couple where one spouse stays at home with children or only works a part-time or low paying job, the couple's overall federal tax burden should decrease. However, if both are high wage earners with few deductions and very similar incomes, their tax burden will generally increase. If the decisions have retroactive aspects, then couples would be allowed to file amended returns for previous years up to the normal limit for amended returns. This would mean some couples would get hefty tax refunds for previous years, while others would be better off not filing amended returns.

Federal Estate Tax

Same sex couples would no longer be taxed on the portion of the deceased spouse's estate passed to the other spouse. Please note this only affects the federal estate tax in most of the decision scenarios. This would only affect people who have estates large enough to trigger this tax. The current estate threshold is $5 million.

Social Security Death Benefits

A same sex individual whose spouse died would be eligible to receive SS death benefits. This includes a $255 lump sum payment and if the spouse's SS payment was higher than the survivor's, they could elect to receive the deceased spouse's monthly payment instead of their lower amount. All SS benefits are based on age, retirement status and other eligibility criteria. There is also SS survivor benefits for children that would not be accessible if the child is not recognized as the child of the deceased.

Health Insurance Taxation

Same sex spouses would be treated the same as opposite sex spouses. If an employer offers free or reduced cost health insurance to spouses and dependents, then the same sex spouse would be eligible for this benefit without the employee being taxed for the imputed value of the benefit. For many employees whose employers allow same sex partners to be covered by the employee's insurance, this means substantial savings over a year. Many individuals are taxed at a level of more than $100 per pay to have their spouse covered due to the federal government considering such insurance value as part of the employee's pay.

The court's decision is expected to be announced by the end of June.

Leo Dunn is an attorney and counselor-at-law practicing in the central Pennsylvania area with a focus on the estate planning needs of the GLBT community. He may be reached at leo@leodunnlaw.com, leodunnlaw@gmail.com, or 717-503-1207.

Chamber continued from page 14

Check out the professionals on our website and in Central Voice.

Ask someone at the Chamber for guidance on your choices.

We are proud of the exponential change of the acceptance of our community. We have successful business leaders, entrepreneurs and companies in our midst. They are there sitting next to you at the bar. You may not realize it. Challenge yourself to be aware of LGBT owned, LGBTE certified, and allied businesses in this community. Spending money with them helps you.

Past Events

The chamber held its Annual Dinner at the Hershey Lodge March 2 and reviewed the 2012 accomplishments to a packed house.

Dan Miller, a founding member of the Business Association of Gays and Lesbians (BAGAL), current Harrisburg City Controller, business owner of Miller, Dixon Drake Certified Public Accounts, former Vice President of Harrisburg City Council and current Mayoral Candidate, spoke to the group.

Justin Nelson inspired us all with the facts that the national LGBT chamber where he's president and co-founder. He has letters of understanding for LGBTE suppliers with each of national governmental agencies.

We installed officers: Deb McClain as President and CEO, Bill Krenz as Vice President, Brenda Dersham as Secretary, and Russ Boggs as Treasurer.

Hava Pell continues to serve on the board of directors. Harry Young joins the board as our newest board member.

The chamber board sent attendees to the TransCentral PA Keystone Conference's dinner gala March 16.

Out April mixer event was held at Sunworks, etc, on April 18. Barb Sunderland and David Leas wowed us with the way they make their concrete products like the podium in the LGBT Community Center of Central Pennsylvania. They report their business opportunities have expanded now that they have successfully completed the LGBT Business Enterprise Certification (LGBTBE) offered by our national chamber and available through their local chamber membership.

Upcoming Events

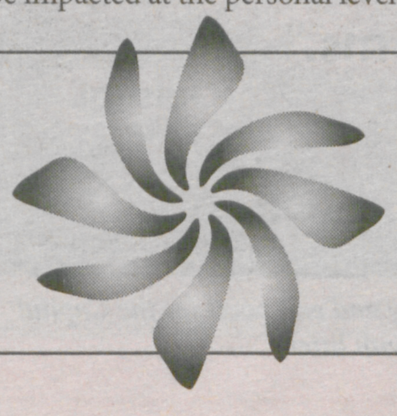
The chamber is attending the Black and White Party at the Zembo Mosque on May 4. The event benefits people living in the region with HIV. Chamber member Alder Health Services is one of two recipients of funds raised. Family First Health, York, is also a recipient.

The next chamber mixer is May 16 at the LGBT Community Center of Central Pennsylvania, in Harrisburg, and hosted by Ernest Fontaine DDS & Michael Simonetti, Peter S. Holgate DPM and Chris Gatesman. This night is nicknamed the "foot and mouth" mixer, as we have a dentist and podiatrist hosting.

June 15 the chamber is supporting Lancaster Pride.

June 19, a mixer is planned for Posh Studios with the very talented photographer Dennis Martin hosting the event with his partner Seth Hamill, of Charter Homes and Neighborhoods fame.

Please check the chamber's website for registration information - www.cpglcc.org



"You'll never find peace of mind until you listen to your heart."

George Michael
Kissing A Fool

Middletown's Gay-Straight Alliance

contd from page one

ing to students you do not have to be a sexual minority to be part of the Gay-Straight Alliance, Doster said.

"You can be straight and still support it," she said.

Advisor Elizabeth Gannon, an English and journalism teacher, was talking to her class about other such groups that were in the news when one student mentioned the plan to start one in Middletown.

"If there's one thing we can all agree on, it's that all students need to feel safe at school in order to learn."

- Ted Martin

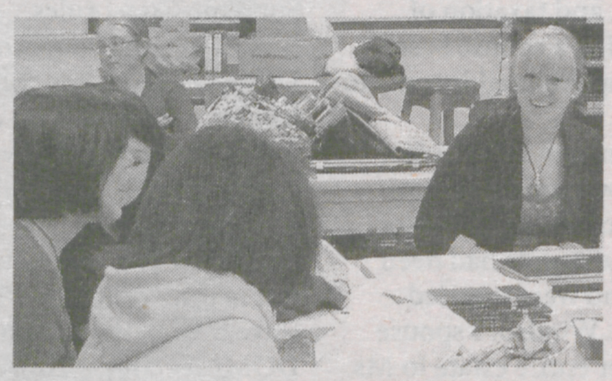
"I think it's a really important club to have," Gannon said. "I think a lot of those students feel like second-class students in the school."

She hopes the students are learning how many teachers in the school are GLBT supportive – and during one event, many teachers met with the group to show their support.

"That was a pretty moving meeting," Gannon said.

Principal Patrick Hruz is one faculty member who is encouraging the club.

"My goal has always been . . .to support all of our students," Hruz said. "I want them to feel good about coming to school, accepted, and valued. In addition, I always want students to be able to share and learn from one another."



Members of Middletown Area High School's new Gay-Straight Alliance meet to support each other and plan upcoming events at the high school.

Photo by Daniel Walmer

"This is a good group of students with a very supportive advisor," Hruz added.

The group plans to celebrate the National Day of Silence on April 19 and support the Ali Forney center for LGBT homeless youth in New York, Gannon said.

The group has also brought in LGBT speakers and is hoping to begin working with other local high school alliances and Penn State Harrisburg's Gay-Straight Alliance, she said.

Many high schools in the area have an alliance or something similar, Hruz said.

"I'm actually surprised by the number of kids who seem committed to the club," Gannon said. "I just think it's been a really positive experience for the kids."

Meanwhile, in related news, Chambersburg Area Senior High School will also have Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) club. After board members voted 5-4 in March not to support the club, two groups have threatened a lawsuit against the district if the board didn't change its vote.

The ACLU of Pennsylvania and Equality Pennsylvania sent a letter to the district's leadership saying the board is in violation of the federal Equal Access Act. March 27 reversed its decision and allowed the club's formation.

"Schools are often hostile environments for gay and transgender youth who experience bullying and harassment in alarming numbers. But in schools with a Gay Straight Alliance, students report feeling safer," said Ted Martin, of Equality Pennsylvania.

"This decision by the Chambersburg School District is an important victory for gay and transgender students statewide and a critical step toward ensuring that all young people are respected in our schools. If there's one thing we can all agree on, it's that all students need to feel safe at school in order to learn."

Making a Difference

contd from page one

either overgrown or strewn with litter. Gutshall and Young's work is part of a PennDOT program called Adopt-A-Highway. Interested parties make application to make improvements in and around areas were the transportation department is also making improvements to roadways. The program requires a two-year commitment to beautify roadsides.

"We strive to be active, engaged citizens who realize the importance of fostering a clean environment. Our work will hopefully inspire others to do the same," Young says.

Both Young and Gutshall are lifelong residents of the region. "We're aware of all our community has done for us. We've grown up here, work here and play here. Harrisburg as the hub of our region has helped shape us," Young says.

Gutshall says the project will incur "very little direct cost" for them but will require they invest their time. "Public service can take many forms. With the bridge, we hope to make a direct impact by taking advantage of a program that is flexible and doesn't require a substantial capital investment," he explains.

"We think as citizens we're all responsible for moving our city forward with the resources afforded us," Gutshall says.

Both sides of Harrisburg's Maclay St. Bridge, a major entry and exit point for the Capital city, are either overgrown or strewn with litter.

2013 Central PA Pride

Parade, Festival, New Walk/Run, All Female Headliner

2013 Pride Festival of Central PA, July 27, once again promises the traditions that have made it a successful event for more than 20 years – plus something new – a run and walk that will support Pride's formal affiliation with The Foundation for Hope.

The festival theme is "It Gets Better".

Headliner Take 147 takes center stage as the festival's main act. "Every year we try to bring in an artist or band that will appeal to the community," says Brad Martin, Pride president.

"This year we wanted to showcase a well-known band from our own area. Although Take 147 was already booked solid for the year, they graciously accepted our invitation to headline at this year's festival. We are excited to have them join us on the main stage and to welcome their ever expanding fan base to the festival."

Purple Run & Walk

The Purple Walk and Run, a 5K event, is new event that will raise funds that stay local to support Pride's programming with The Foundation for Hope. The foundation's mission is to offer educational resources around bullying, depression, suicide and self-harm. The funds raised locally through the run/walk will be used to support these programs offered eventually offered to the region through Pride.

"Our partnership with Pride Festival of Central PA provides our foundation and your local affiliate a voice among the LGBTQ community. It signifies a joining of forces to ensure that those who are bullied, depressed, or contemplating suicide or self-harm will have resources at their disposal," said Foundation for Hope executive director Jesse Gantt.

"LGBTQ youth must know that they are love and cared for. Our partnership with your region's Pride ensures this message will get out there in a programmatic, focused and well-managed way," Gantt said.

The Purple Walk and Run begins 8 a.m. July 27 along the Logan's Run Course.

Revenue

The festival costs approximately $70,000 to stage each year. Revenue comes from local business and organizational sponsors, vendor fees, generous donations from the public, ticket sales. Expenses include, but are not limited to, entertainment, MCs, stages, tents, tables, chairs, sound equipment, restroom facilities, advertising, marketing, outreach and public relations, event security, including police patrol and contracted security guards, street blocking costs associated with the parade.

Women's Invitation

"I want to say that as president of the Pride Festival of Central PA, our dedicated volunteers welcome all and would like to have any woman involved in our event," Martin says by extending an invitation. In the planning stages, he formally invited the Women's Discussion Group organizers Heidi Notario-Smull and Sarah Newman to attend planning meetings. The group is affiliated with the LGBT Community Center of Central Pennsylvania.

"We want everyone to feel welcome. We need all the help we can get to plan this year's Pride Festival and other Pride activities held throughout the year," adding "This event is not for only the board and our regular volunteers. Pride is an event for everyone."

Pride Festival of Central PA is held on Sat., July 27, Noon to 6 p.m. The new Run-Walk is scheduled for 8 a.m. along Logan's Run. The 5K event starts and finishes on Harrisburg's Walnut Street Bridge. The Unity Parade is 11 a.m. to noon prior to the festival's opening.

Other Pride events are held from July 26 through July 29. Go to website: www.prideofcentralpa.org for updates on Festival, Parade, and new Run-Walk.

Out of Town continued from page 25

home to the city's relatively new sports stadiums as well as the Andy Warhol Museum, which celebrates the life of the late pop art icon, who grew up in nearby Oakland. Created inside an eight-story 1911 warehouse, the museum contains more than 8,000 works and is an outstanding, engaging, and often very funny museum, laid out with abundant commentary on Warhol's life (and his homosexuality). Close by are the Carnegie Science Center, the National Aviary, and the Mattress Factory, known for its provocative larger-than-life installations created by visiting artists in residence.

South of downtown, the city rises sharply above the Monongahela River toward Mt. Washington, a workaday neighborhood with spectacular views of downtown. Ride up the slope via the Monongahela Incline, which leads to a viewing platform and a small museum. A short drive east is the bohemian South Side, a repository of funky shops, galleries, and eateries that once anchored Pittsburgh's Lithuanian and Polish communities.

East of Downtown

Still farther east of downtown, Oakland was built from the gobs of money generated during Pittsburgh's industrial heyday and today contains hospitals, universities, and high-tech firms. Forbes and 5th avenues anchor the University of Pittsburgh and formidably endowed Carnegie Mellon University campuses. Be sure to visit the Carnegie Museums of Art and Natural History, which contain well-conceived architectural and decorative arts exhibits, a cache of artifacts from ancient Egypt, and the nation's third-largest dinosaur collection. Nearby Schenley Park, ideal for a stroll, is anchored by the 1893 Phipps Conservatory, comprising 13 rooms of exotic flora.

East of Oakland is Shadyside, a gentrified patch of neatly kept yards and attractive old homes, many of them gay-owned. Ellsworth Avenue (around the 5800 block) has several gay-popular eateries and businesses, and more chichi Walnut Street (along the 5500 block) holds mid- to high-end chain stores. It's a short drive east to Clayton, the former estate of industrialist Henry Clay Frick - it now consists of a magnificent mansion and other historic outbuildings, including the Frick Art and Historical Center, which has an outstanding collection of European master paintings.

Pittsburgh's dining scene has really blossomed of late, especially in some of the hip, outlying neighborhoods like Lawrenceville, East Liberty, and Bloomfield. Along Butler Avenue in Lawrenceville, you'll find all sorts of cool eateries - Coca Café (cocacafe.net), which also has a branch in the Mattress Factory Museum, serves modern American fare is a great pick for brunch; Cure (curepittsburgh.com) is known for innovative, meaty fare, including pig's cheek ragu and ox-tail ravioli; and Tamari (tamaripgh.com) is a gorgeous space acclaimed for artful Asian-Latin fusion fare, such as Asian tamales with chicken, Chinese sausage, and green curry. In Garfield (near East Liberty), Salt of the Earth (saltpgh.com) serves fine renditions of farm-to-table fare, including a hanger steak with collards, bacon, and Dijon.

Strip District

In the Strip District, lesbian-owned Pamela's Diner, aka P&G's (pamelasdiner.com) is a fine spot for hearty breakfast fare and delicious sandwiches at lunch - the blueberry crepe pancakes are a favorite. There are other branches in Squirrel Hill, Shadyside, and Mt. Lebanon. And the original Primanti Bros. (primantibros.com) has been doling out huge sandwiches, topped ridiculously but deliciously with French fries and cole slaw, since 1933.

The elegant Eleven Contemporary Kitchen (www.elevenck.com), which is well-suited to special-occasion meals, is part of the gay-friendly Big Burrito (bigburrito.com) group, which operates several slick, lounge-y restaurants around town, including the fun Pan-Asian restaurant Soba and the colorful and lively Cal-Mex restaurant Mad Mex. For a terrific meal near downtown's gay bars, check out Meat & Potatoes (meatandpotatoespgh.com), a lively gastropub serving sophisticated yet accessible burgers, sweetbread tacos, bone marrow with grilled bread, and other carnivore-driven delights.

Among coffeehouses, the local chain Crazy Mocha (crazymocha.com) has several fun locations around town, including a particular gay favorite at Shadyside. And Espresso A Mano (espressoamano.com) is a sleek, artisan roaster in Lawrenceville.

The 900 block of Liberty Avenue downtown has a few the city's top gay nightlife options, including neighborhoody There Ultra Lounge; the popular and long-running Images video bar, and 941 Saloon, which has an after-hours upstairs section that pulses into the late-night hours. Relatively new Cruze Bar (cruzebar.com) in the Strip is a very popular dance club in an attractive space - it's arguably the snazziest gay bar in the city. Low-keyed Real Luck Café (realluckcafe.com) is nearby, draws a mix of men and women, and serves pub food and drinks. A few blocks away is the popular gay bathhouse, Club Pittsburgh (clubpittsburgh.com). Not far away on Polish Hill, Donny's Place is a country-western dance bar with a pool hall drawing a mixed-gender crowd. Downstairs is a guy-oriented basement nook known as Leather Central.

Shadyside's quintessentially queer video lounge and cafe, 5801 Ellsworth (5801videolounge.com) is a hip but friendly place for cocktails, good home-style cooking, and great conversation, and nearby Spin draws a similar, mostly gay mix of scenesters, young professionals, and fairly collegiate sorts. In increasingly trendy Lawrenceville, the Blue Moon is a fun and welcoming spot with fun videos on TV, karaoke, and an easygoing crowd, and Cattivo (cattivo.biz) - especially popular with lesbians but friendly to all - stands out as a great place both to drink and eat (expect pizza, hoagies, strombolis, and the like).

Bloomfield

In nearby Bloomfield, the hipster live-music bar Brillo Box (brillobox.net) draws an eclectic queer-hetero crowd and serves very tasty food, from burgers to Korean-bbq seitan. And Lawrenceville's New Amsterdam Bar (newamsterdam412.com) caters to a similarly cool crowd for its good list of microbrews and tasty pub fare.

Among accommodations, you can't beat either the location or the swank decor of the Westin Convention Center (westinpittsburgh.com), which sits near Liberty Avenue's gay nightlife and the Strip's restaurants and markets. But for sheer history, check into the old-world Omni William Penn (omnihotels.com), a 1916 beauty in the heart of downtown. The excellent, mid-priced option downtown, the Doubletree Pittsburgh Downtown (doubletree3.hilton.com) nicely appointed rooms (many of them suites) and a great central location.

In the Cultural District, the Courtyard Marriott Pittsburgh Downtown (marriott.com) occupies four adjacent historic buildings. A few miles east, the Courtyard Marriott Shadyside/Oakland (marriott.com) is close to gay-popular shopping and dining along Liberty and Ellsworth avenues.

The gay-owned Inn on the Mexican War Streets (innonthemexicanwarstreets.com) occupies a grand mansion with seven elegantly furnished rooms and suites—it's steps from the National Aviary and near the Warhol and Mattress Factory museums. Also on the North Side, the Parador Inn (theparadorinn.com) is another lovely, gay-owned option occupying a stunningly restored redbrick mansion with beautiful original interior details, including stained-glass and ornate woodwork. Another gay-friendly option, the Arbors Bed & Breakfast (arborsbnb.com) occupies a handsome 19th-century house on 2 pastoral acres. Rooms have unfussy but elegant furnishings.

Andrew Collins is the editor in chief of the GLBT travel magazines OutAloha and OutCity, and he covers gay travel for the website GayTravel.About.com. He can be reached care of this publication or at OutofTown@qsyndicate.com.

Never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one's definition of your life; define yourself.

Harvey Fierstein

Local Officials Co-sponsor Hate-crimes Bills

Sen. Rob Teplitz is a co-sponor of Senate Bill 42. State Rep. Patty Kim is a co-sponsor of House Bill 177. Both measures add sexual orientation and gender identity as protected classes in the state's hate-crimes law. A court decision made in 2007 removed LGBT individuals from the state's hate-crimes law.

Pennsylvania legislators have stepped up the action on getting an LGBT-inclusive hate-crimes law through the state Senate and House. Senate Bill 42 has been introduced by Sen. Jim Ferlo (D-38th Dist.). State Rep. Brendan Boyle (D-170th Dist.) has introduced House Bill 177. A version of the House measure had earlier been introduced by former Rep. Josh Shapiro.

Teplitz is joined by Sens. LeAnna Washington (D-Fourth Dist.), James Brewster (D-45th Dist.), Lawrence Farnese (D-First Dist.), Anthony Williams (D-Eighth Dist.), Shirley Kitchen (D-Third Dist.), Christine Tartaglione (D-Second Dist.), Judith Schwank (D-11th Dist.), Jay Costa (D-43rd Dist.), Daylin Leach (D-17th Dist.), Wayne Fontana (D-42nd Dist.), Vincent Hughes (D-Seventh Dist.) and Patrick Browne (R-16th Dist.).

Cosponsors for Boyle's bill include Reps. Kevin Boyle (D-172 Dist.), Adam Ravenstahl (D-20th Dist.), Don Costa (D-21st Dist.), Mike Fleck (R-81st Dist.), Tina M. Davis (D-141st Dist.), Michelle Brownlee (D-195th Dist.), Vanessa Brown (D-190th Dist.), William Kortz (D-38th Dist.), Michael O'Brien (D-175th Dist.), Michael Schlossberg (D-132nd Dist.), Louise Bishop (D-192nd Dist.), Scott Conklin (D-77th Dist.), Michael Sturla (D-96th Dist.), Dan Frankel (D-23rd Dist.), Steven Santarsiero (D-31st Dist.), Cherelle Parker (D-200th Dist.), Maria Donatucci (D-185th Dist.), Mark Cohen (D-202nd Dist.), Mike Carroll (D-118th Dist.), Curtis Thomas (D-181st Dist.), Mark Rozzi (D-126th Dist.), Stephen Kinsey (D-201st Dist.), Rosita Youngblood (D-198th Dist.), Mark Painter (D-146th Dist.), Robert Freeman (D-136th Dist.), Stephen McCarter (D-154th Dist.), Matthew Bradford (D-70th Dist.), Rep. Erin Molchany (D-22nd Dist.), Daniel McNeill (D-133rd Dist.), Brian Sims (D-182nd Dist.), John Taylor (R-177th Dist.) and Thomas Murt (R-152nd Dist.).

By the Book

What the Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 2357, says about homosexuality: "Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, tradition has always declared that 'homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered.' They are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved." Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth are five times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers.

navigating marriage equality

By Suzanne S. Friday, Attorney at Law

Can a Victory in Windsor Translate to Pennsylvania?

On March 27, 2013, the United States Supreme Court heard oral arguments in United States v. Windsor. A decision from the court is expected in June. The case is an appeal from a Second Circuit decision upholding the federal district court ruling that the Defense of Marriage Act, or DOMA, a federal Law passed in 1996, is unconstitutional. The case came to court because Edith Windsor, the 83-year-old widow of Thea Spyer, had to pay the Internal Revenue Service $363,000 in estate taxes after the death of her wife. Edith or "Edie" and Thea, New York residents, were married in 2007 in Toronto, Canada, and had been life partners for 40 years. When Thea died in 2009, New York recognized the Canadian marriage as a legal marriage. However, DOMA prevented the federal government, and the Internal Revenue Service, from recognizing the marriage for tax purposes.

Under federal estate tax law, a heterosexual spouse would not have had to pay the tax thanks to an unlimited marital deduction that can be applied to reduce or eliminate the estate tax. If Thea had been "Theo," Edie would have had no federal estate tax liability. The New York decision was considered a significant victory for tax equality and same-sex couples, but the case is now in the hands of the Supreme Court. If the court finds in favor of Edie, and strikes down DOMA as unconstitutional, many believe the decision will influence state legislatures and state courts in a positive way. Whether this will have any impact in Pennsylvania is yet to be seen.

Despite the increase in the number of states that now recognize either same-sex marriages or civil unions, Pennsylvania does not. Same-sex couples cannot marry in Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania will not recognize a legal marriage or civil union performed in another state for purposes of its own estate and tax law. The implications of the Pennsylvania Marriage Law on same-sex couples when one member of the couple dies are harsh. For instance, if a Pennsylvania resident dies without a valid Will, the estate of the decedent passes by intestate succession. For purposes of the intestate succession law, a surviving member of a same-sex couple is considered an unrelated person and has no rights to receive any part of the decedent's estate. This situation can be remedied by preparing a valid Will and leaving all or a portion of the estate to the partner, but there is no recourse if there is no Will.

Finally, when a Pennsylvania resident dies, state law imposes an inheritance tax on the value of the decedent's probate estate and certain non-probate assets. The rate of tax varies depending on the relationship between the decedent and the person or persons inheriting the decedent's estate. In the case of a heterosexual married person, assets left to a spouse incur no inheritance tax because the tax rate for spouses is 0.00%. Assets left to children and other lineal descendants are taxed at the rate of 4.5% and assets left to siblings incur a tax of 12%. Assets left to anyone else are taxed at the rate of 15%. Same-sex partners, whether legally married elsewhere or not, are considered "anyone else."

A futile attempt at tax equality occurred in September 2011, when Representative Michelle Brownlee and other members of the Pennsylvania legislature introduced HB 1828. The bill, which would have added domestic partners to the list of relatives currently exempt from paying Pennsylvania inheritance tax, was referred to the finance committee and never came up for a vote. If HB 1828 had passed, the Pennsylvania inheritance tax law would have been revised so that "inheritance tax upon the transfer of property passing to or for the use of an individual in a domestic partnership shall be at the rate of zero per cent for estates of decedents dying on or after January 1, 2012."

Unfortunately, a positive decision in Windsor, and even a repeal of DOMA will not automatically change the law in Pennsylvania. Individual states still have the right to make and enforce laws governing their citizens when not preempted by federal law. A repeal of DOMA will have a positive effect on Pennsylvania same-sex couples when it comes to federal taxes and other federal benefits, but as demonstrated by the failure of HB 1828, it will be difficult to change the minds of most Pennsylvania legislators and courts and bring Pennsylvania in line with the growing support for equal rights. Perhaps a favorable decision by the United States Supreme Court this June will encourage Pennsylvania legislators to recognize and address the inequality of certain individual laws, such as the inheritance tax law, or inspire a Pennsylvania resident to again challenge the law in court.

Suzanne S. Friday is a partner with Nauman Smith Shissler & Hall and chairs the firm's Tax, Trusts, and Estates practice group.

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Cardinal Dolan Demeans Gay Relationships While Saying Church Should Welcome

By John M. Becker

As I paged through a recent New York Times, a surprising headline greeted me: "Dolan Says the Catholic Church Should Be More Welcoming to Gay People." I was incredibly intrigued, of course — considering that Dolan is one of the American Catholic Church's most outspoken homophobes — so I read on.

Don't get me wrong, I'm nowhere near naïve enough to have expected a departure from the Catholic Church's anti-gay teachings. But I wondered after reading the headline if perhaps Dolan might be advocating that his church soften its bigotry by shifting focus away from its worldwide crusade against LGBT rights and onto something that Jesus actually talked about, like feeding the hungry and serving the poor.

It didn't take Cardinal Dolan long to disappoint. According to the Times, Dolan implied in an interview with ABC's George Stephanopoulos that the Catholic Church's opposition to equality will continue unabated. What he thinks needs improvement is the messaging around the hierarchy's homophobia:

He defined marriage as "one man, one woman, forever, to bring about new life," but, he told Mr. Stephanopoulos, "we've got to do better to see that our defense of marriage is not reduced to an attack on gay people."

"And I admit, we haven't been too good at that," the cardinal continued. "We try our darnedest to make sure we're not an anti-anybody."

Translation: we still oppose your right to legally enter into a civil marriage with the person you love and intend to continue spending time and money fighting against your equality, but we're not anti-gay! And for heaven's sake, please don't think we're attacking you!

Seriously. Remember last year when the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, of which Dolan is president, decided to launch an "ambitious public relations drive" in an attempt to rehabilitate the American Catholic Church's tattered public image? This strikes me as a continuation of that strategy.

The conversation between Stephanopoulos and Dolan continued (transcript provided by Igor Volsky at ThinkProgress):

STEPHANOPOULOS: And you know, especially this week – because it's been at the top of the news – for many gay and lesbian Americans -- gay and lesbian Catholics, they feel unwelcome -- in the Church. And what do you say as a minister, as a pastor – to a gay couple that comes to you and say, "We love God. We love the Church. But we also love each other, and we -- want to raise a family in faith. What do you say to them?

DOLAN: Well, the first thing I'd say to them is, "I love you, too. And God loves you. And you are made in God's image and likeness. And – and we – we want your happiness. But – and you're entitled to friendship." But we also know that God has told us that the way to happiness, that – especially when it comes to sexual love – that is intended only for a man and woman in marriage, where children can come about naturally.

Did you get that? As far as Cardinal Dolan is concerned, gay and lesbian couples don't really have marriages or families. In his mind, same-sex marriages like mine are undeserving of the same civil benefits, protections, and recognition that all other marriages in this country enjoy… because they aren't real marriages. But in his magnanimity, Dolan is now apparently willing to concede that couples like Michael and me — who have dedicated our lives to loving each other and committed ourselves to one another forever — are "entitled" to "friendship."

Don't get me wrong, I'm not suggesting that successful relationships aren't based on friendship. They are. Michael is my best friend — but it doesn't stop there. He's my husband (whether Dolan likes it or not), which means he's my best friend, my confidante, my joy, my inspiration, and my lover. (Yes, Cardinal Dolan, we have sex. Hot, sweaty, passionate, beautiful, fulfilling gay sex.)

With respect, sir, you say that you "love" gays and lesbians, but if trivializing our relationships as mere friendships and opposing our basic rights is how you define the word "love," you can keep it. If you believe that God is the author of love, you can't honestly say that gays and lesbians are "made in God's image" while also believing that our love for each other and its sexual expression is disordered and inferior. I realize that claiming to "love" LGBT people helps you rationalize your bigotry and sleep better at night, but it doesn't change the fact that you don't "love" someone by denigrating and dehumanizing them or by denying the reality and the beauty of that person's most important relationship.

And if that kind of "love" is how you make others feel welcome, it's no wonder that so many Catholics are voting with their feet and heading out the door.

Cardinal Dolan, your self-righteous belittling of same-sex relationships harkens back to a troubling time not long ago when LGBT people were so invisible that couples living together were referred to as "roommates" and "friends" so as not to make straight people squeamish. I understand that that's the world you'd prefer to live in, but it's a world that no longer exists. It's 2013, and gays and lesbians are out, proud, and forming not only friendships, but loving, committed, lifelong relationships — and even marriages! — with one another. And you're fighting a losing battle: three-fourths of American Catholics support civil marriage equality for same-sex couples, as do 81% of adults under 30.

So you go right on ahead pretending that your patronizing doublespeak constitutes some kind of welcoming, loving outreach to the LGBT community and our straight allies. We see right through it, and the rest of the country does as well. The longer you persist in your spiritual bullying, the more quickly you're bringing about your own utter irrelevance.

History is passing you by, Cardinal Dolan. Enjoy the view.

OPEN STAGE OF HARRISBURG

In the Next Room or the vibrator play
By Sara Ruhl
Until May 4

She longed to connect with her husband… In a prim Victorian home at the dawn of the age of electricity, a gentleman doctor is obsessed with the marvels of technology and what they can do for his patients. The doctor is not sure exactly how his invention helps the women he treats for "hysteria," but they do keep coming back. His wife Catherine is only a bystander in her husband's world, listening at the door from the next room as he treats his female patients. A touching comedy about marriage, intimacy and electricity. Est. Running Time: 2 hours 30 min. One intermission. Recommended for mature audiences. Tickets: 717-232-Open (6736)

SHARADIN BIGLER THEATRE
Ephrata Performing Arts Center

Brighton Beach Memoirs
June 13-15, June 20-22 & 26-29

This heartwarming coming-of-age comedy by Neil Simon (author of EPAC's 2011 hit Lost in Yonkers) is inspired by Simon's own youth in Brooklyn's Brighton Beach neighborhood during the Depression. Eugene Jerome, the playwright's alter-ego, shares with us the challenges of puberty, his shaky self-image, and assorted family problems when his recently widowed aunt and her two daughters move in with the family.Info: 717-733-7966; sharadinbiglertheater.com

HERSHEY THEATRE

Colin Mochrie and Brad Sherwood
June 21, 8 p.m.

Following the enormous success of ABC's "Whose Line Is It Anyway?" Colin Mochrie and Brad Sherwood, two stars of the Emmy nominated series, have teamed up to present an evening of extraordinary improvisational comedy. Using their quick wit, Mochrie and Sherwood take contributions from the audience to create hilarious and original scenes. Throughout the evening, the show becomes truly interactive as audience members are called to the stage to participate in the fun. Tickets: 717-534-3405, 1-800-745-3000, HersheyTheatre.com.

WHITAKER CENTER

Join the Summer Dinosaur Invasion: 14 Dinos in Motion - Plus Hunt and Eat like a Dino!
June 1 - September 1

Journey back in time, millions of years ago, and experience stomping, roaring, robotic dinosaurs in the summer limited engagement exhibition, Dino Adventure. Located inside Gloria M. Olewine Gallery of Harsco Science Center, guests will tremble at a growling T-Rex, witness a Corythosaurus mother tend her brood, and discover a nestful of eggs ready to hatch. Dino Adventure features interactive, life-sized dinosaur robots that roar, feed, fight, and care for their young. Tickets: 717-214-ARTS (2787)

STRAND CAPITOL THEATRE

J. Roddy Walston and The Business
Special Guest: Toy Soldiers
June 8, 8 p.m.

Baltimore rockers J. Roddy Walston and The Business will rock the Capitol theatre with an energetic, blue-collar rock ethic the Baltimore City Paper once said "makes James Brown look lazy."
Tickets: 717-846-1111

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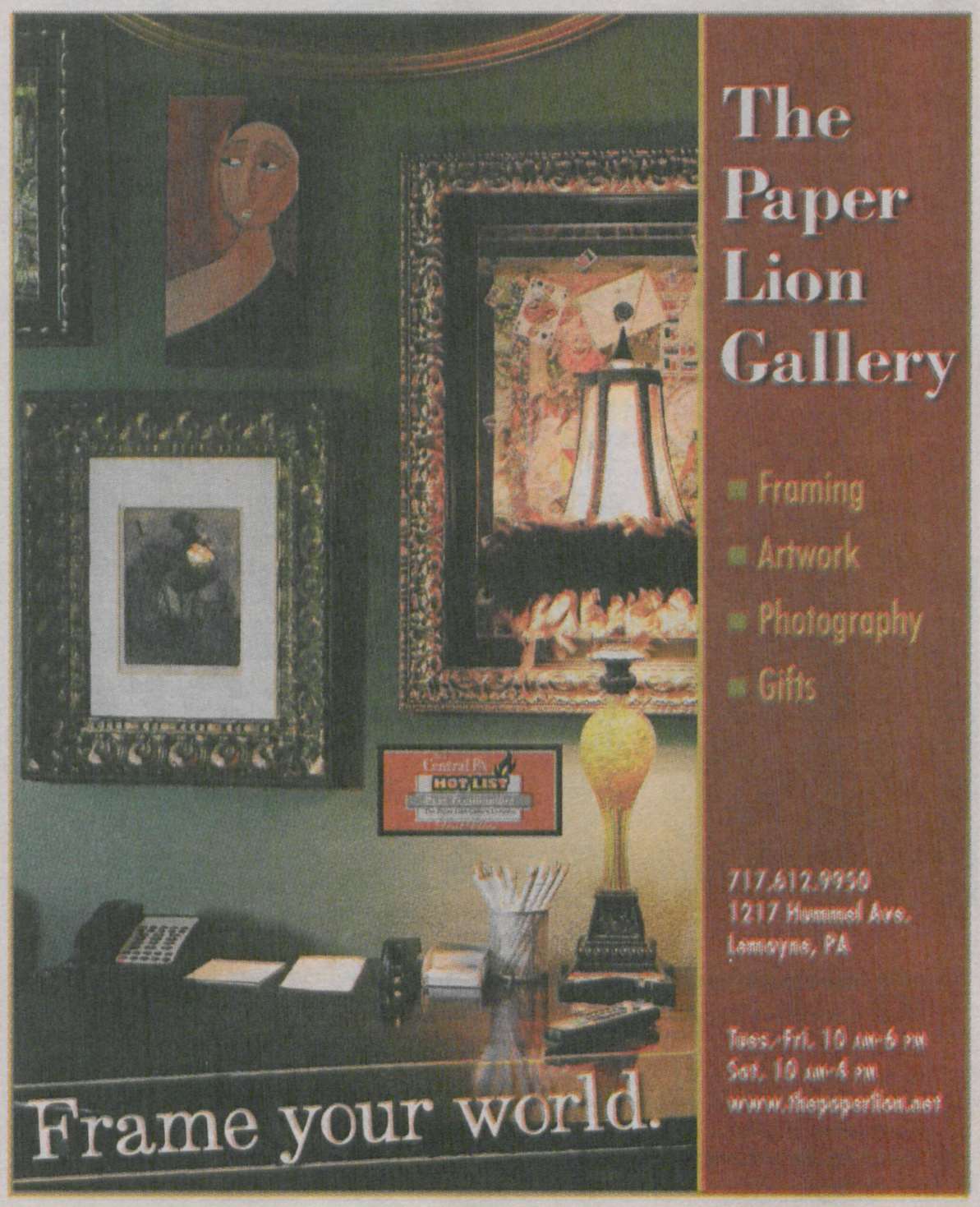

Young Male Stripper Talks to Central Voice about Escaping the Vortex

Blogger and former stripper, Justin Hernandez, reflected with Central Voice about how his early years of abuse and neglect led to his eventual descent into the dark worlds of addiction, stripping, and even male escorting.

Inside the Vortex is now available digitally and in paperback on Amazon.com, iBookstore.com and BarnesandNoble.com. The memoir serves as a prequel to Hernandez's popular "Naked in New York City" blog.

Filled with twists and turns, chaos and drama, the poignant coming-of-age story recounts Hernandez being raised by a single mother on the rough streets of the Bronx. How he came out as gay youth, sashaying with the pier queens on Christopher Street. How he was rejected by Christina Aguilera, and then escaping to Hollywood to pursue his dance-star dreams.

"I was a very confused youth," Hernanadez says. "It was the late 80s, early 90s, gay hadn't yet gone mainstream. I knew I was different from my friends but other factors complicated my understanding myself.

For Hernandez, that meant abuse. "When you are forced to perform sexual acts as a minor, it's humiliating," he says bravely. Vortex reveals how, at age 11, he was mentally, physically, and eventually sexually abused by his stepfather. "I went through my teenage years believing I was this broken person who didn't deserve to be treated well. Sadly, I carried that mentality into my twenties and most of my thirties. It took me a long time to deprogram myself and understand my worth."

At 17, Hernandez came out of the closet as a gay man. It was the early nineties and as luck would have it, he was living with his mother in a one-bedroom apartment in the gay mecca of the world: New York's West Village. Still, his queer proclamation wasn't received well by his mother. "She was very unhappy about it and didn't want to hear anything gay-related," he remembers. "There was a lack of support from her, which was upsetting because I lost the one person I wanted to turn to most. It made me very angry and very needy. I looked for solace through my rapidly developing addictions, and of course, through striking up relationships with all the wrong men."

To escape the criticism – and to chase his dreams of touring the world as pop music dancer – Hernandez left NYC for the promise of a more glamorous life in Hollywood. He went on a few auditions and landed a few minor jobs but it wasn't long before he made the transition from legitimate dancing to stripping and then escorting.

"When there is unhappiness in your heart, it will follow you wherever you go," he explains. "Initially, I thought things would be different because I was in a new city. But I didn't even blink an eye when I was approached with selling my body. It was almost like I saw the money and checked my soul at the door. I thought I was sitting on top of the world with the enormous cash deposits I made at the bank every other day. As time went on, the nagging feeling in the pit of my stomach increased, but I just internalized whatever was bothering my conscious and kept working."

He admits to bedding over five hundred men, but says, at the time, he didn't equate his lifestyle with addiction. He was becoming completely nonchalant and desensitized to sex. It was mechanical and it no longer felt special, but he wanted and needed more of it. "I didn't know how to stop. It was fun, but only because of the conditions that surrounded the encounters."

He found it funny when he would go shopping and wind up having sex with the sales clerk in the dressing room. "And when I was paid for it, the money was the real aphrodisiac, not the men."

His behavioral patterns started to change the wilder things got. He became sleep-deprived because of all the thoughts going through his head. He also began relying on another crutch aside from sex – alcohol. "This was Los Angeles so there was no taking the train home at the end of the night. I drove, and there were more than a few times when I really shouldn't have been behind the wheel."

No longer being rational about many things, he began to feel helpless and lost. It was slow and painful downward spiral. The turning point came when Hernandez began attending weekly therapy sessions in Los Angeles. But change didn't happen overnight. He had to take the lessons he learned and apply them in his day-to-day life. He admits he wasn't always successful and stumbled quite a few times. He also hurt a lot of people along the way. But when he finally left Hollywood and returned to New York City, he says he felt like he had a new lease on life. "I wanted to share my experiences about living in one of the most exciting cities in the world," he says.

He began writing a blog called Naked in New York City. "Most of the entries were about my dating life, mixed up with commentaries about gay culture and other fun stuff. However, as I continued to write about my current life, I began to allude to my past and how it has affected, and still affects, the choices that I make."

The fans of the blog encouraged Hernandez to tell his whole story in a memoir. Thinking he had come to terms with everything from his past, he agreed to do it. "But some of the stories were really upsetting and made me very emotional. Putting it in print and then reading, editing, and rereading everything has given me full closure. I'd like to think that I have forgiven most of the people who didn't treat me well growing up. That doesn't mean I would give them a hug and kiss if I saw them on the street, but I can think of them now without going to a negative or toxic place emotionally."

He has learned the value of compassion, kindness, and self-worth; and has come to realize that it's never too late for change and growth. "I went through some rough times, but in the end, the person I am now is a result of the road I have travelled. Every event led me to another, and they ultimately led me to the point I am now.

Writing down his experiences has helped him to "process my experiences, make amends." At first, as he explained, his mom was not accepting of his gayness but is now more comfortable than ever. "Everyone needs time to adjust. Me to the realities of my life, my addictions, my mom to our shared past," Hernandez says. "Addiction is different for everyone. We all slay our demons in our own ways."

As he spoke with Central Voice, he was proud to reveal he had completed 30 days of sobriety from alcohol and working on a 60 day goal.

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Marriage Equality Rally Draws 150 to Harrisburg Federal Building

Allentown, Lancaster Hold Vigils

By Central Voice

In a show of solidarity 150 people gathered March 26 at Harrisburg City's Federal court house to rally as the US Supreme Court heard oral arguments that day and the next on marriage equality cases involving the constitutionality of the Definition of Marriage Act (DOMA) and California's anti-same-sex Proposition 8.

The Harrisburg rally was organized by Chris Dietz and Katie Somers, Marriage Equality for PA. Rallies were also held in Lancaster, Allentown, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Erie, and Scranton, and in about 170 locations across all 50 states. York PFLAG, Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, members attended Harrisburg's rally.

A decision is expected in the latter half of June when the court normally releases decisions, that month and usually in October.

Speaking at the Harrisburg rally were Steve Dorko, president, Capital Region Stonewall Democrats; Katie Somers, Marriage Equality for PA; Harrisburg City Controller Dan Miller; State Rep. Patty Kim, 103rd Dist., member of Equality Caucus; Deb McClain, Central PA Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce; Ted Martin, Equality PA, Candace Sillers, Alder Health Services. Following the speakers, the Harrisburg Men's Chorus sang.

From left to right, rally speakers leading the crowd in Pledge of Allegiance that includes "marriage equality for all": Steve Dorko, Capital Region Stonewall Democrats; Katie Somers, Marriage Equality for PA; Deb McClain, Central PA Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce; Candace Sillers, Alder Health Services; Harrisburg City Controller and Mayoral candidate Dan Miller, PA State Rep. Patty Kim, 103rd Dist., and member of Equality Caucus, Ted Martin, Equality PA. *Central Voice Photo*

Steve Dorko, president, Capital Region Stonewall Democrats

Dorko noted that the local political group "vets candidates on marriage equality and other lgbt issues" as they approach the organization for an endorsement.

Harrisburg city controller and mayoral candidate Dan Miller

Harrisburg city controller and mayoral candidate Dan Miller underscored that he and his husband, married last year in Washington, D.C., "are second-class citizens" since Pennsylvania grants no rights, not even basic job protection.

Candace Sillers, Alder Health Services

Sillers, whose organization Alder Health Services provides lgbt primary health care services, noted that being in a loving relationship "promotes health".

Ted Martin, Equality PA

Ted Martin, Equality PA, who married his partner in California, called for equal treatment under all state and Federal laws.

Deb McClain, Central PA Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce

McClain said many people are changing their view especially after "they have a conversation" with an lgbt person. "They change the way they think."

PA State Rep. Patty Kim, member of the legislature's LGBT Equality Caucus

PA State Rep. Patty Kim, representing the Greater Harrisburg area and member of the legislature's LGBT Equality Caucus, roused the crowd when she shouted "I love gay people!" Referring to Sen. Rob Portman, R-Ohio, and his son Will who told his father in 2001 he was gay while a freshman at Yale, "I'm not going to wait until my son tells me he is gay to support marriage equality," Kim said.

Katie Somers, Marriage Equality for PA, told Central Voice she'd like opponents of marriage equality to understand that the only choice she made "was when to come out. I always knew growing up that I'd marry and have kids one day; just didn't realize, at the time, that meant I would not have the same rights as my heterosexual peers."

"My wife and I love each other," Somers said. "We are all humans being and have the same basic emotional needs and unfortunately, don't have the same basic protections under our current federal laws."

Shamaine Daniels, Harrisburg Area NOW, told Central Voice her local chapter supports marriage equality "because we believe everyone deserves to pursue healthy and loving relationships."

Partners in the event included Capital Region Stonewall Democrats, Marriage Equality for PA, Equality PA, LGBT Community Center of Central PA, MCC of the Spirit, LGBT Interfaith Coalition, TransCentral PA, Pride Festival of Central PA, Silent Witness, Unitarian Universalist Church, Alder Health Services, PA NOW, Planned Parenthood, and media sponsor Central Voice.

Katie Somers, Marriage Equality for PA

See Lancaster and Allentown Rallies on page 34

Marriage Equality continued from page 33

Lancaster Rally

"How long? Not long, because no lie can live forever said Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Montgomery, Alabama on March 25, 1965 when freedom marchers from Selma arrived at the State Capitol. They inspired many of us in our youth as they inspired the nation then and now," said Lancaster event host Barry L. Russell.

More than 100 people gathered in Lancaster's Binns Park. "Reaction to the event was overwhelmingly positive," Russell said. "The county houses some of the craziness wing nut groups in the state. Religious bigotry runs rampant," Russell said.

Pictured on the event poster with his married partner Brett Weaver, Jeff Clouser said,"It's human rights, civil rights and equal rights. It's about love."

Speakers also included Susan Minasian, college chaplain, Franklin & Marshall College; Todd E. Smith, Lancaster City Council member; and Pastors Megan Marie Malick, Anabel Profitt, Lancaster Theological Seminary. Ten community members led an LGBT Affirmation Ceremony. Silent Witness Peacekeepers participated as did members of Fierce, a musical group.

Susan Minasian, Franklin & Marshall College. Photo by Amy Fishburn

Todd E. Smith, Lancaster City Council Member. Photo by Amy Fishburn

Brent Weaver and Jeff Clouser, married. Photo by Amy Fishburn

* * *

Allentown Vigil

More than 150 people braved freezing temperatures to show support for marriage equality March 23 in front of the federal courthouse in Allentown. The event hosted nine speakers and the A Cappella Chorus: Muhlenberg College's Girls Next Door.

The rally was organized by Pennsylvania Diversity Network Executive Director Liz Bradbury.

Vigil keynote speaker Barb Baus explained the unfair tax burden same-sex spouses must pay when their legally married spouse dies, a condition that mirrors her life. She told the hushed crowd that her legally married wife Cathy Burgi died last year, and that "the state of Pennsylvania is treating me as a total stranger to Cathy, my partner of 15 years, by requiring me to pay the 15% inheritance tax." Heterosexual spouses pay no inheritance tax.

"Poll after poll continues to show that more Americans support marriage equality - this is a fight that is being won not by the LGBT community alone, but with support from businesses, labor unions, faith leaders, mayors and ordinary Americans who know that it's wrong when equal rights are denied solely based on who we love," said Adrian Shanker, President of Equality Pennsylvania.

150 Lehigh Valley and Allentown supporters of marriage equality gathered March 23 at the Federal Court House.

Help a child in need of a caring home while earning extra money and a reward that can't be measured in dollars. Become a foster parent and receive:

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Pennsylvania MENTOR

Looking to Get Out and Active?

Alder Health Services is offering a range of programs called "Out and Active" designed to get participants out and active.

"Alder Health believes that to improve individual and community health outcomes, individuals must have the ability to participate in a host of programs and activities designed to engage their minds, bodies and spirits," says Phil Goropoulos, ACEO, Alder Health Services.

Every three months Alder issues a new schedule of programs, forums and activities. While any member of the community is welcome to participate in all of the programs and services of Alder Health, the Out and Active Programs are specifically designed and created to meet the unique needs of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community and to create an opportunity for members of the community to interact and engage with one another in a healthy, active and supportive environment.

To register visit www.AlderHealth.org/OutandActive or call 1.800.867.1550.

Here's a sample of programs running until June. Full program available at www.alderhealth.org:

Womyn's Open Floor Basketball, Harrisburg

Every Wednesday to June 12, 6:30- 8:30 p.m.

Relive your glory days on the basketball court. This open time for shoot arounds and pick-up games will help to gauge interest in the possible formation of a womyn's basketball league as a part of the Out and Active Guide. No RSVP is needed just come and have a great time.

Location: Penbrook UCC, 56 Banks St., Harrisburg
Contact: Candace Sillers
Cost: FREE (Donations appreciated to cover Court Costs)

Womyn's Open Floor Basketball - Lancaster

Every Monday to June 10, 6-8 p.m.

Relive your glory days on the basketball court. This open time for shoot arounds and pick-up games will help to gauge interest in the possible formation of a womyn's basketball league as a part of the Out and Active Guide. No RSVP is needed just come and have a great time.

Location: Lancaster Rec Association, 525 Fairview Ave., Lancaster
Contact: Cindy Vicente
Cost: FREE (Donations appreciated to cover Court Costs)

Ballroom Dancing

Every Sunday May 5 to May 26, 2-3 p.m.

Experience the thrills of ballroom dancing with introductory lessons held specifically for individuals enrolled through Alder Health Services. The les-sons will be held weekly during the Month of May. Additional classes will be added if interest warrants. The class is limited to 15 pairs.

Location: PA Dance Sport, 585 E. Main St., Hummelstown
Cost: $100 ($25 a class per pair)
Advance Registration is Required

Running Club

Dates: To Be Determined Based On Interest

The Alder Health running club welcomes individuals who have an interest in running and love to be outdoors. We welcome beginners to advanced run-ners as long as you are up for the challenge. All runs will take place out-doors and will be between 3 – 5 miles in distance with the possibility of working up to a 10 mile run.

Please e-mail RunningClub@AlderHealth.org for more information
Contact: Kali Thompson
Cost: FREE

Men's Health 101

Harrisburg Date: Monday, June 3, 6:30-8 p.m.

What does it mean to be healthy? What should men be doing to maintain and/or improve their health? These are questions that all of us have but rarely are we able to get a direct answer. Bring your questions to this open discussion of Men's Health. After a brief overview of what healthcare men should be accessing, Amanda will field questions of interest to the partici-pants.

Harrisburg Location: Alder Health 100 N. Cameron St., Harrisburg
Instructor: Amanda Bostdorf, CRNP
Cost: FREE (Please Register in Advance)
Light Refreshments Provided

Womyn's Health - 10 Steps to a Longer, Healthier Life

Lancaster Date: Tuesday, May 21, 6:30-8 p.m.

Explore the 10 steps that every womyn should take to maintain/improve/enhance their health. Bring your questions to this interactive workshop and discussion of womyn's health. After a brief overview of what healthcare womyn should be accessing, the discussion will focus upon the individual health questions and concerns of participants.

Lancaster Location: Alder Health - 1891 Santa Barbara Dr., Lancaster
Lancaster Instructor: Amanda Bostdorf, CRNP
Cost: FREE (Please Register in Advance)
Light Refreshments Provided

Trans Health - Understanding Hormone Therapy

Lancaster Date: Tuesday, June 11
Harrisburg Date: Monday, May 6
6:30-8 p.m.

Offered again by request, this workshop helps individuals who are in the process of deciding if they wish to being the transition understand the basic of hormone therapy. Hormone therapy can be complicated and daunting. Not all of the information, resources and pharmacy programs are accurate or truthful. Take the time to learn the facts and make informed decisions about your future and become an advocate for your needs.

Lancaster Location: Alder Health - 1891 Santa Barbara Dr., Lancaster
Harrisburg Location: Alder Health - 100 N. Cameron St., Harrisburg
Instructor: Amanda Bostdorf, CRNP
Cost: FREE (Please Register in Advance)
Light Refreshments Provided

Alder Health Services
Our Health, Our Community

Aging Services and Programs Understanding Social Security and Medicare

Harrisburg Date: Tuesday, June 4 , 6:30-8 p.m.

Should I take Social Security at 62 or should I wait? What does Medicare really cover? I don't currently take any medications, do I really need to enroll in Medicare Part D? Understanding Social Security and Medicare can be confusing. This workshop help you understand the basics of these two essential government programs designed to support aging members of our community so that you can make the right choices for you and your needs.

Harrisburg Location: Alder Health 100 N. Cameron St., Harrisburg
Instructor: Liz Leen, LSW, MSW
Cost: FREE (Please Register in Advance)
Light Refreshments Provided

CPLAN Night Out

Dates: April 25, May 23, June 27 (6-8 pm)

CPLAN Night Out features social and educational programs for LGBT seniors in Central PA. The group meets at the Central PA LGBT Center (1306 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg).

More information is available at ww.alderhealth.org on Support and Discussion Groups - Womyn (Women - 18+), Fifty and Fab (Men - 50+), Being Me (Trans - 18+), Positive Living (HIV+ - 18+), Bi The Way (Men & Women - 18+), Parents & Guardians of Transgender Youth (Men & Women) , and groups held at the LGBT Community Center, Women's Discussion Group and Gender Variance Discussion Group.

Capital Region Stonewall Democrats Announced Endorsements

After vetting through a questionnaire and a vote by members, Capital Region Stonewall Democrats have announced candidate endorsements for the May 21 Primary Election. "All of our endorsed candidates have demonstrated they will stand by our side in the fight for equality," CRSD president tells Central Voice.

DAUPHIN COUNTY

Judge, Court of Common Pleas - Anne Gingrich Cornick

Mayor of Harrisburg - Dan Miller (The CRSD Executive Board recommended either Dan Miller or Eric Papenfuse for endorsement. Dan Miller received the majority vote of the active membership.)

Harrisburg City Council - Ben Allatt - Shamaine Daniels - Robert Drum - Pat Stringer

(The CRSD Executive Board recommended the following for endorsement: Ben Allatt; Shamaine Daniels; Robert Drum; Ellis R. Rick Roy; Eugenia Smith; Pat Stringer; Kelly D. Summerford; Wanda R.D. Williams. The 4 endorsed candidates received the majority vote of the active membership.)

Susquehanna Township Commissioner
Michael Schubert, 2nd ward - Frank Lynch, 4th ward - Justin Fleming, 8th ward
Derry Township Supervisor - Steve Todd
Middletown Borough Council, 2nd ward - Benjamin H. Kapenstein
Swatara Township Commissioner, 2nd ward - Tom Connolly
Millersburg Borough Council - Chris Dietz, Incumbent
Elizabethville Borough Council - Travis M. Enders
YORK COUNTY
Special Election, State House of Representatives, 95th District - Kevin Schreiber
Mayor of York - Carol Hill-Evans
LANCASTER COUNTY
Mayor of Manheim Borough - Brian Kresge
Lancaster City Controller - E. William Andrews
BERKS COUNTy
Reading City Council, District 5 - Ernie Schlegel

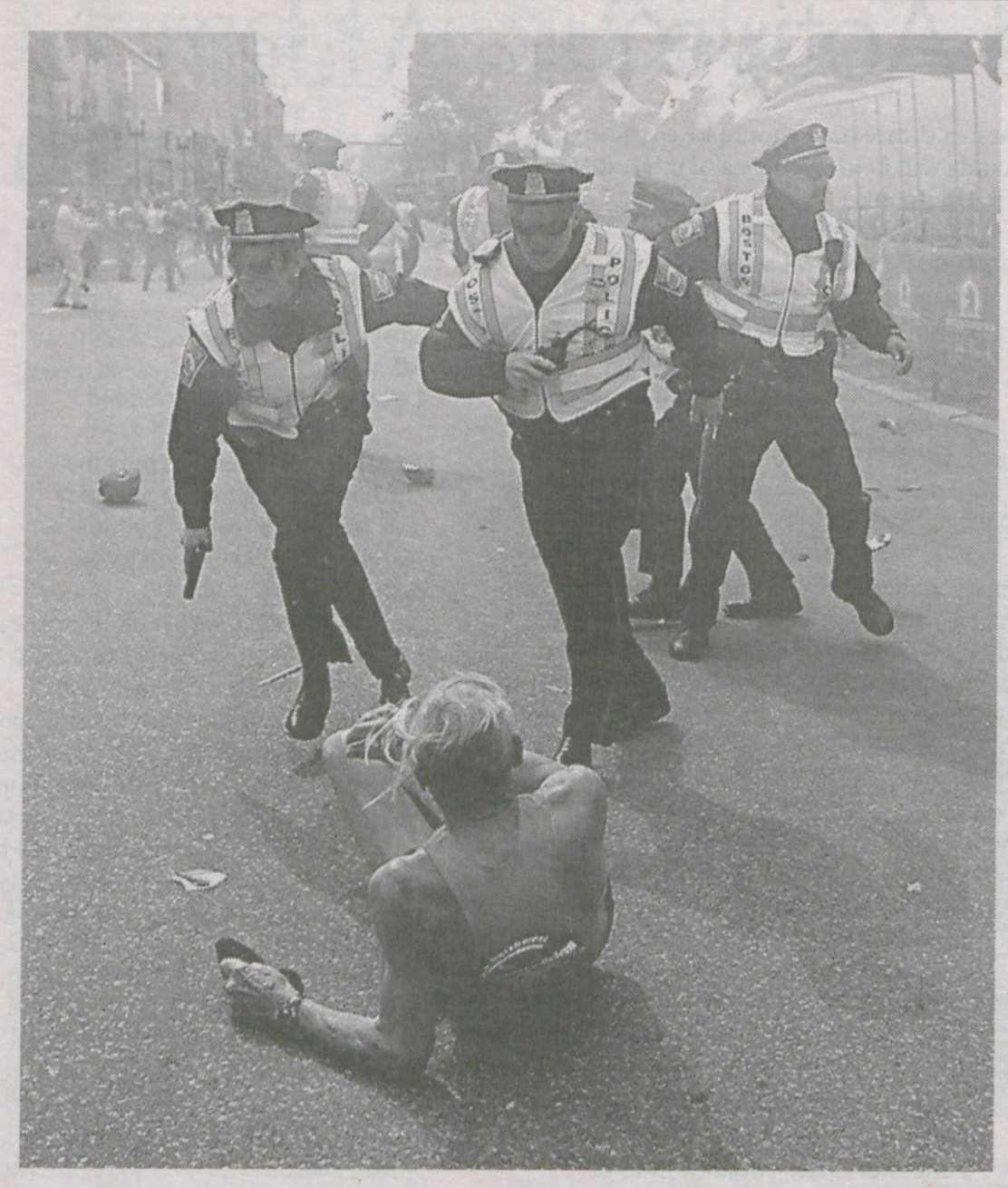

Photo by John Tlumacki, The Boston Globe

Boston Marathon: When Is Mention of Sexuality Appropriate?

Javier Pagan, far right in the photo, is the Boston Police Department's GLBT liaison. He was standing right behind the flags where the first bomb went off nearby at the finish line of the Boston Marathon April 15. The photo above, shows 78-year-old marathoner Bill Iffrig lying on the ground. Sports Illustrated used the above image for its cover story the week of the tragedy. After many lgbt media outlets noted Pagan's sexuality, he is an openly-gay man, there were various reactions – positive and negative. Comments noted that it was an inappropriate time to point out his sexuality against the backdrop of such a tragedy and deflected attention away from the real news. Other comments noted it is important for the world to see that lgbt people serve in all roles across society. For example, at the time of Gabby Gifford's shooting when she was saved by Daniel Hernandez, Latino media play up the angle.

During the September 11 attacks, Mark Bingham, an American public relations executive, was a passenger on board United Airlines Flight 93. Bingham is believed to have been one of the passengers who, along with three others, formed the plan to overtake the plane from the hijackers, and led the effort that resulted in the crash of the plane into a field near Shanksville, PA and all of the passengers' deaths. Bingham has been widely honored posthumously for having "smashed the gay stereotype" mold and really opened the door to many others that came after him.

Dan Choi Convicted

A federal judge recently found gay former Army Lt. Dan Choi guilty of a misdemeanor offense of disobeying a lawful order by police to disperse from the White House fence during a November 2010 protest against "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." He was fined $100 in a non-jury trial in a case that has dragged on for two-and-a-half years. Choi and 12 others had handcuffed themselves to the White House fence at a time when the activists said President Obama and Congress weren't doing enough to advance legislation to repeal the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law that barred gays from serving openly in the military.

book review

By Deborah Battisti & Lori Lane
Dauphin County Library System
www.dcls.org

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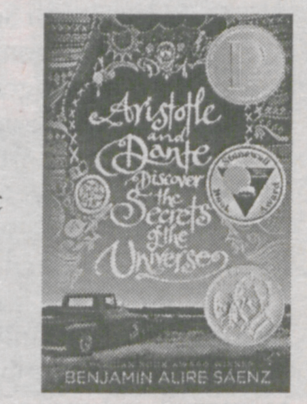
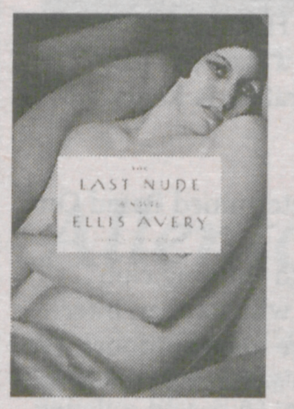
Drama, Jazz Age, Coming Home

The column is penned by Deborah Battisti and Lori Lane, Dauphin County Library System, who review new and old titles in book, audiobook, and downloadable formats. The following books all won the Stonewall Award (an ALA award that recognizes the best in LGBT literature) for 2013:

Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe by Benjamin Alire Saenz



Fifteen-year-old Ari Mendoza is an angry loner with a brother in prison, but when he meets Dante and they become friends, Ari starts to ask questions about himself, his parents and his family that he has never asked before. Library Journal says, "Sáenz' gifts for lyric prose and pitch-perfect dialog communicate the inner workings of a complex, loving, narrator, on the verge of discovering the truth of his own body in a book that is as beautiful as the desert sky on the outskirts of the boy's native El Paso."

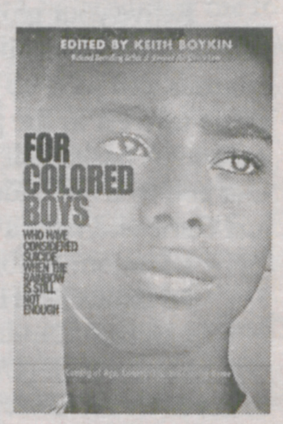


The Last Nude by Avery Ellis

Set in Paris in 1927. One day in July, a young American named Rafaela Fano gets into the car of a coolly dazzling stranger, the Art Deco painter Tamara de Lempicka. Struggling to halt a downward slide toward prostitution, Rafaela agrees to model for the artist, a dispossessed Saint Petersburg aristocrat with a murky past. The two become lovers, and Rafaela inspires Tamara's most iconic Jazz Age images. A season as the painter's muse teaches Rafaela some hard lessons: Tamara is a cocktail of raw hunger and glittering artifice.

For Colored Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Still Not Enough: Coming of Age, Coming Out and Coming Home.

Edited by Keith Boykin



Young gay men of color tell their own stories, addressing long-standing issues of sexual abuse, suicide, HIV/AIDS, racism, and homophobia in the African American and Latino communities. These are real people coming of age, coming out, dealing with religion and spirituality, seeking love and relationships, finding their own identity in or out of the LGBT community, and creating their own sense of political empowerment.

The Fine Art of Photography- May 5

Jeffrey Stoner will do a presentation on "The Fine Art of Photography" at the Art Association of Harrisburg on Sunday, May 5, from 2 to 4 PM. A donation of $10 is requested at the door.

The first photograph was made in 1826 and for the next three decades cameras were primarily used as a recording device. In the 1850s photographers began experimenting with their cameras and darkrooms to produce prints that were art and the images they produced with their rudimentary equipment were amazing.

Beginning in the 1890's, photographer, publisher and gallery owner Alfred Stieglitz set out to prove that photography was a medium as capable of artist expression as painting or sculpture. The acceptance of photography as a fine art is due to the lifelong efforts of Stieglitz and those visionaries that followed him.

Jeffrey Stoner's presentation will showcase the fascinating progression of the art of photography. He will also share tips and techniques that you can use to improve your own photography.

Jeffrey Stoner's passion is to capture images of the beauty and wonder that surround us. Having had a lifelong fascination with photography, he began selling his images in 2003. In 2007, he and his wife moved to northeastern Tennessee, which opened additional opportunities for making images in the mile-high mountains and fertile valleys in the area. Stoner is particularly known for his "Goats of Roan" series, and his images have been featured in numerous publications.

Info: 717-236-1432; www.artassocofhbg.com. The Art Association is located at 21 N. Front St., Harrisburg.

Open Stage Announces 2013 "Women Who Care"

Open Stage of Harrisburg has announced the names of its 2013 "Women Who Care."

Initiated in 2000, the WWC program honors women who have demonstrated unselfish devotion to the Greater Harrisburg community and to the arts, including Open Stage. Awards are presented before each Friday night performance of the theatre's Stories from Home: "City Beautiful" Festival, June 7-29.

The 2013 Open Stage "Women Who Care" awardees are: Joan Prescott, Rachel Jones Williams, Jeanine Ruhsam, Oralia Dominic, and Ellen Brody Hughes.

Joan Prescott is a career educator and lifelong community volunteer who will be honored Friday, June 7. Ms Prescott has a long history of leadership positions in numerous community organizations, including the Central PA Multiple Sclerosis Society, the American Diabetes Association, the Harrisburg Foreign Policy Association, the West Shore Education Association, the American Cancer Society, the Exchange Club of Harrisburg, and the Friends of the State Museum of PA. She was most recently Executive Director of the Harrisburg Schools Foundation. Ms. Prescott retired from the West Shore School District after 25 years' service, and was an adjunct professor at HACC and Penn State Harrisburg.

Rachel Jones Williams will be honored Friday, June 14. Writer, researcher and historian Ms Jones Williams is a specialist in African-American history, women and gender studies, and exhibit design and development. She is a research and training specialist for Dynamed Solutions, LLC,and is the author of Trailbazers: Innovative African Americans in Pennsylvania History. She is Preeminent Scholar of Ralph Elwood Brock, the first African American Forester, and his family of West Chester. She has been Development Coordinator for St. Stephen's Episcopal School, an Exhibit Designer for the PA Historical and Museum Commission. She has been a volunteer for numerous community organizations, including the NAACP, the Commonwealth of PA Black History Month, Girl Scouts in the Heart of PA, Open Stage's Capital 10-Miler, and Elizabethtown College. She is a member of the Board of Directors of Historic Harrisburg Association.

Jeanine Ruhsam is a community activist and entrepreneur with a background in the humanities, residential design and horseracing. She is manager/owner of Ruhsam Building and Design, Ltd/Sunnyrock Homes in Wellsville, was a professional trainer of thoroughbred horses, and a professional jockey. Raised in Taiwan and Virginia, she is President of TransCentralPA, was a member of the Board of Directors of IFGE (International Foundation for Gender Education), Washington, DC, and is co-founder and chair of the national Keystone Conference: a Celebration of Gender Diversity based in Harrisburg. She is also on the Board of the LGBT Center of Central PA. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in American Studies at Penn State Harrisburg. Her award will be presented Friday, June 21.

Dr. Oralia Dominic is a behavioral scientist on the staff of the Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, who studies the effect of behavioral, and community factors on chronic disease by race/ethnic and geography, and the impact of community- and clinic-based approaches to reduce cancer and comorbid diabetes health disparities. Her research has been funded by the National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, Appalachia Community Cancer Network, and Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH). Her work is widely recognized. She has served on state and national committees, including the PA DOH Pennsylvania Diabetes Action Plan (PDAP) Executive Steering Committee, PA DOH's Office of Health Equity Advisory Committee, and the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) National Health Taskforce. Dr. Dominic teaches undergraduate as well as resident and graduate courses in research methods for epidemiology, health education and health promotion, and health disparities.

Ellen Hughes' long career as a classical music host and producer began in 1980 at Harrisburg's volunteer-operated station WMSP, where she served as host and program director. In 1990 she began working at WITF, Harrisburg's public radio and television station, primarily announcing classical music and hosting and producing many interview programs. She welcomed over 800 castaways from around the world to talk about their favorite music on Desert Island Discs. She also founded and directed the Next Generation Festival, bringing free chamber music for 10 years each June to Central Pennsylvania. She joined Market Square Concerts in June 2008 for a 3-year stint as Executive Director, has written on food and the arts for several local publications, and in 2009 began writing the Art & Soul column for the Patriot-News, which appears weekly in Thursday's Go! section and on pennlive.com. Ms. Hughes will receive her award on Friday, June 28.

In addition, the "Women Who Care" will be honored at a special luncheon for family and friends on Thursday, May 9 at 11:30 at Felicita Resort in Fishing Creek Valley. For more information on the "Women Who Care" program and its events, readers may call the Open Stage Education Department at 717-232-6736.

thinking out loud

By Abby Dees

"If we're going to wear men's clothes, let's at least do it right."

Who's Afraid of a Lesbian in a Tie?

I have a problem with lesbians in ties. I don't have a problem with lesbians with short hair (I've got short hair), big clunky boots (those too), tattoos (yep), excess facial hair (no comment) or even drag kings (I'm not cocky enough). I'm not talking about FTM transsexuals either – they're not lesbians as far as I know. It's a lesbian in a tie that makes me groan. Standard issue lesbians in poorly executed Windsor knots.

Please, before you flame me for my internalized homophobia or unsolicited sartorial judgment of my sisters, allow me to be the first person to admit that I might be a hypocrite. After all, I put my own cat in a tie last month and posted the pictures on Facebook. There are worse things in the world than lesbians in ties, which is why I am examining my excessive reaction to it here, today, with some guarded hope that you will nicely debate the point in the comments section if you're reading this online.

This came up because I invited my straight sister to a big gala event for my favorite lesbian civil rights organization. She asked about the dress code and to assure her that she didn't need to go shopping for something new to wear, I emailed her the photo page for last year's bash. After scanning dozens of thumbnails, I summarized my assessment of the expected attire thusly: "Clearly, all you need is a tie."

Because my sister has hung with lesbians for years and is also the butchest straight woman I know, I felt no need to explain further, but I did have that niggling feeling that I didn't want the rest of the world to see what lesbians wear to parties. Which made me feel like a schmuck

I asked my partner how she felt about lesbians in ties and she barked, "I hate it!" I asked her to explain, and she said, "Because they look like high school boys from the '80s." I knew what she meant – one does not find nicely tailored suits and French silk in a gaggle of lesbians; instead, it's skinny dad ties, typically uncoordinated and too loose. Still, "hate" is a strong word for poor tailoring. I doubt she would have such a reaction to practical shoes and acid-washed jeans, which are about as fashionable.

I prodded her more and, no surprise, she voiced what I felt when I looked at all those pictures: that a lesbian in a tie confirms that old stereotype about lesbians – that we want to be men. This doesn't explain, however, why my partner and I don't have the same reaction to all those other traditional signifiers of masculinity that lesbians (including the two of us) often appropriate; i.e., the clunky boots and short hair.

What's the thing about a tie? Maybe "it" is the fact that lesbians wear them so badly. Think about it. We have made an art form of lesbian hair. We put Doc Martins on the map for women in America. If you want to see how to make jeans look cool, find a young lesbian and follow her around. There is, in fact, such a thing as lesbian fashion. Except that lesbians never did figure out what all moderately stylish men know: throwing any old tie onto any old outfit just won't cut it.

I think if I saw a confident butch woman wearing her tie like she gave it some serious thought, I'd be impressed. Straight people probably still wouldn't get it, but they couldn't possibly miss her sense of self-worth and dash, also known as pride.

My advice, though you weren't asking, is to get the best damn tie you can afford, practice your knot technique, proudly ask your local cleaners to make your suit actually fit your girly body, and wear it like you mean it. Thankfully, there are now even some clothing companies that cater specifically to the butch woman of style. I probably won't be buying a tie myself (except for my cat), but you're well within your rights to tell me to get over it.

Abby is a civil rights attorney-turned-author who has been in the LGBT rights trenches for 25+ years. She can be reached through her website: queerquestionsstraighttalk.com

"Labels are for filing. Labels are for clothing. Labels are not for people."

~ *Martina Navratilova*

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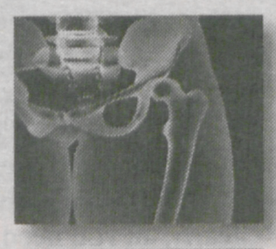

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www.yorkcountyparks.org
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PRIDE IN THE PARK July 21

Join Alder Health Services and Central Voice for the 2nd Annual Pride in the Park July 21 at Hershey Park, Hershey, PA. Last year's event drew 150 official registrants and many more members of the region's LGBT community and allies. Event volunteers reported that they were encouraged when told by others in the park that day of their support for Pride in the Park.

Tickets include a free, commemorative t-shirt as well as the option to join other participants at the community picnic that day. All ticket options are offered at below the cost for a single admission to the park.

General Admission: $42; Admission & Community Picnic: $56; Community Picnic Only: $25 (Season Ticket Holders); all tickets include a free, commemorative t-shirt.

All tickets must be picked-up on Sunday, July 21 at the Pride in the Park Welcome Station located at the Tram drop-off near the entrance to Hershey Park. The Welcome Station will be open from 9:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m. The Community Picnic starts noon and will be open for about one hour. The picnic is all you can eat. Tickets are limited and must be purchased in advance.

Tickets: www.alderhealth.org/register or 1-800-867-1550

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